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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2014

**U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
*Washington, DC.***

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:06 a.m. in room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Reed, Nelson, Manchin, Shaheen, Donnelly, Kaine, Inhofe, McCain, Chambliss, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer, Graham, Vitter, and Lee.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. We welcome today General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC, Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, to hear testimony on the security situation in Afghanistan. We thank you, General Dunford, for your decades of great service to our Nation.

This committee has held regular hearings on Afghanistan over the years. More than 2,200 Americans have given their lives there, and thousands more have been wounded. Despite those sacrifices, and despite the fact that Afghanistan harbored the terrorists who attacked our Nation in 2001, a recent Gallop poll showed that for the first time, a plurality of Americans believe that sending our forces to Afghanistan was a mistake.

I do not share that view. More importantly, neither do the Afghan people. A recent public opinion poll in Afghanistan shows that a large majority of Afghans believe the conditions in the country have improved over the last decade.

Our troops in Afghanistan, working with Afghan Forces and the forces of other coalition countries, have taken critical steps to deny safe havens to terrorists and ensure that Afghanistan does not again serve as a sanctuary for terrorists seeking to harm the United States. Indeed, there are a number of encouraging signs of continued progress in Afghanistan. During last summer's fighting season, Afghan Forces prevented the Taliban from seizing control of any urban area or district center. A report this month by the independent Center for Naval Analyses concluded that, "For a force that is very much still in its infancy, the Afghan Security Forces's performance last year—judged on its own merits—should be considered a success." In a poll released last month, large majorities of the Afghan people expressed confidence in their army and their national police.

Better security has meant improvements in Afghan society and the economy as well. More than 8 million Afghan children are now in school, eight times as many as in 2001. Under the Taliban, virtually no Afghan girls received an education; now 2.6 million girls are in school. In 2001, Afghanistan had 20,000 teachers, all male; today there are 200,000 teachers, including 60,000 women. U.S. assistance has helped build or refurbish nearly 700 schools across Afghanistan. Maternal and infant mortality has declined dramatically. The average Afghan has a life expectancy now of 62 years, compared to 45 years under the Taliban. Only 7 percent of Afghans support a Taliban return to power.

Now, how is it that a large majority of the Afghan people think that conditions in Afghanistan are improving when most Americans do not? Unfortunately, the American people rarely read about positive developments in Afghanistan. Instead, the media focuses almost exclusively on negative incidents, depriving the American people of the sense of accomplishment that they would receive if they were provided a balanced view. As a result, our troops have not received the recognition for the positive changes in Afghanistan for which they and their families have sacrificed so much.

The positive developments are not the whole story, of course. Real and daunting challenges lie ahead. Taliban terror attacks will continue and will be the focus of the media. The improving Afghan military has proven its willingness to fight, but is still in the early stages of building the support functions, such as logistics, maintenance, intelligence, and air power that are necessary for combat troops to do their jobs effectively.

A bilateral security agreement (BSA) providing the protections for our troops is essential if even a modest number of our forces are to remain in Afghanistan. President Karzai has refused to sign a BSA that he negotiated, and that received the strong support of the loya jirga that he convened. President Obama has rightly decided to look beyond President Karzai to the next Afghan president following elections in early April. Each of the Afghan presidential candidates has indicated a willingness to sign the BSA, and any of them would likely be a more reliable partner than President Karzai.

Much continues to be at stake for our national security, for the security of our friends and allies around the world, for regional stability, and, of course, for the Afghan people. A recent letter by Afghan Parliamentarian Fawzia Koofi highlighted the extraordinary changes of the past decade, particularly for Afghan women like herself. She points out that 12 years ago Afghan women's participation in public life was prohibited and the prohibition was enforced through harassment and abuse. Ms. Koofi was nearly abandoned at birth, simply because in the Afghanistan of that time, a female child had no future.

In the post-Taliban Afghanistan, she became a senior leader of the Afghan parliament. Ms. Koofi wrote: "It has been a difficult journey, marked by blood and violence, but we have made significant gains and achievements, which would not have been possible without the generous support of the international community, especially the American people."

The Taliban have announced their intention to disrupt the April 5 election. They won't succeed. The Afghan people will stand up to their threats. They do it every day. Only if President Karzai and the Afghanistan Government permit or perpetrate fraud will the election fail to be credible.

All in all, we mustn't lose sight of our accomplishments in Afghanistan or we will risk losing them. If we don't maintain a moderate level of support in the years ahead, we will also risk losing the gains that we have made at such high cost.

Senator Inhofe.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was in Afghanistan in February and I observed the same thing that you did, so I won't list those things that the public just doesn't know about. There's one thing I would mention that was on my list that wasn't on yours, and that is in going through the Kabul Airport there was not one empty gate. That's usually an indication. You can see what's happening.

There's a lot at stake right now. We can't repeat the mistakes of the administration in Iraq, where the abrupt drawdown resulted in a deteriorating security situation, an increase in violence, the resurgence of the al Qaeda-linked groups, and the growth of terrorists. We must ensure that decisions about the future of our mission in Afghanistan after 2014 are based on sound strategy and the facts on the ground. To do that we must trust our military commanders on the ground who have told me two things just a month ago: One, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) has made great progress and is now bearing the overwhelming majority of the brunt of fighting against the Taliban; and two, we need to continue to support the development of the ANSF, especially in the critical areas of developing enablers and fighting terrorists.

In Afghanistan, President Karzai's refusal to sign the BSA despite support by the Afghan people has cast a doubt about the future of Afghanistan security and stability. But Karzai's irresponsibility in not signing the BSA doesn't really matter. The will of the people, including through the explicit endorsement by the elders, the tribesmen, and the loya jirga, make it clear that the next President will sign this. So we'll tough this one out until that takes place.

I really appreciate, General, the personal time you've spent with all of us to give us the information on what's really going on there. I only wish, as I told you yesterday, that the public were aware of what we're aware of.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Inhofe.

General Dunford.

STATEMENT OF GEN. JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR., USMC, COMMANDER, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE

General DUNFORD. Good morning, Chairman Levin, Ranking Member Inhofe, distinguished members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning and to represent the men and women of U.S. Forces Afghanistan. Their courage, com-

mitment, and performance are a direct reflection of your support. I'm confident that no force has ever deployed better trained or equipped.

We are now in the final year of the combat mission in Afghanistan, a mission to deny safe haven to al Qaeda terrorists who attacked our Nation on September 11, 2001. We recognize that our vital national interests are best served by a stable, secure, and unified Afghanistan, an Afghanistan that is a capable and willing partner in the war against terrorism.

We've accomplished much in pursuit of those ends. Since September 11, our forces have placed extraordinary pressure on al Qaeda and extremist networks in Afghanistan. Today, as a result of those efforts, al Qaeda terrorists are focused on survival rather than on planning attacks against the West. Since September 11, and with increased emphasis beginning in 2009, we've focused on developing ANSF. Today, as a result of those efforts, capable and confident Afghan Forces are securing the Afghan people and the gains that we have made over the past decade.

Since September 11, we've worked to improve the daily lives of the Afghan people. Today, as a result of those efforts, as the chairman and the ranking member outlined, Afghans have increased access to clean water, electricity, new roads, and education. But more important than any sign of progress in Afghanistan, the Afghan people have something today that they did not have in 2001. They have hope for the future.

We've paid the price for those achievements. The chairman mentioned the over 2,200 Americans that have been lost and thousands more Afghans and members of the coalition have also made the ultimate sacrifice. We vow to give their sacrifice meaning and never to forget them or their families.

Some people have questioned our progress and pointed out that the overall security situation in Afghanistan didn't really change between 2012 and 2013. That's true, and when put in perspective, it's also extraordinary, because security remained roughly the same with the Afghans assuming the lead and with over 50 percent of the coalition redeploying during that period of time.

After watching the Afghan Forces respond to a variety of challenges since they took the lead in June, I don't believe the Taliban insurgency represents an existential threat to the Government of Afghanistan or to the ANSF. I'm also confident that they can secure the upcoming presidential election and the Nation's first democratic transfer of power.

Yet, to make our progress enduring, work remains to build long-term sustainability of the Afghan Forces. Although the Afghans require less support in conducting security operations, they still need assistance in maturing the systems, the processes, and the institutions necessary to sustain a modern army and a police force. They also need continued support in addressing capability gaps in aviation, intelligence, and special operations. To address these gaps, a train, advise, and assist mission will be necessary after this year to further develop Afghan self-sustainability.

A continued counterterrorism mission will also be needed to ensure that al Qaeda remains focused on survival and not on regeneration. Without continued counterterrorism pressure, an

emboldened al Qaeda will not only begin to physically reconstitute, but they'll also exploit their perceived victory to boost recruitment, fundraising, and morale.

In closing, it's fair to ask if we're winning in Afghanistan. I believe the answer is yes and several facts allow me to say that with confidence. First and foremost, our efforts in Afghanistan have pressured the terrorist network and have prevented another September 11.

Second, we have built the ANSF that, with increasingly reduced levels of support, are capable of providing security and denying terrorists safe haven.

Third, we're providing a stabilizing influence in the region that's providing the time and space for a wide range of complex issues to be addressed.

Finally, as a result of our efforts, the Afghan people face a decade of opportunity within which they can determine their own future, free of the brutality and the intolerance of the Taliban. Despite all the skepticism surrounding our mission, that looks like winning to me.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear this morning. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Dunford follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR., USMC

Afghanistan: What We've Achieved

I. WHERE WE ARE—STATE OF THE CAMPAIGN

In the final year of the military campaign, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and our coalition partners have not forgotten the objective that brought us to Afghanistan more than 12 years ago: to prevent the country from once again becoming a safe haven for al Qaeda and international terrorism. Since 2001, our presence in Afghanistan and the extraordinary efforts of both conventional and special operations forces have prevented another September 11. Today, USFOR-A forces continue to place constant pressure on terrorist networks. Concurrently, troops from the 49-nation International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) continue to develop credible and capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—forces that can secure Afghanistan in the long term and prevent the re-emergence of safe havens from which al Qaeda can launch attacks against the United States and her allies.

Last June, coalition forces achieved a major milestone in the military campaign when the ANSF took the lead for security operations nationwide. Progress was further made when the ANSF emerged from the 2013 fighting season as a confident force capable of securing the Afghan people. With the ANSF in the lead, ISAF forces transitioned to a support role and began a train, advise, and assist mission initially focused on further maturing ANSF combat capability. Currently, ISAF advisors are reorienting their focus away from developing combat skills to now developing the capabilities and institutions needed for the ANSF's long-term sustainability.

The 9 remaining months of the ISAF campaign will have a decisive impact on Afghanistan's future. We will be focused on supporting the ANSF as they prepare for the fighting season, political transition, and security transition in December, when they will assume full responsibility for Afghanistan's security. ISAF will also continue to posture the force in preparation for NATO's post-2014 Resolute Support train, advise, and assist mission that will address gaps in capabilities that are necessary for the ANSF to become self-sustainable.

II. WHERE WE ARE—STATE OF THE ANSF

Today, Afghanistan is being secured by a confident ANSF with limited coalition support. The only unilateral operations ISAF is conducting are for our own force protection, sustainment, and redeployment. As a result of the ANSF's new lead role and the coalition's new support role, our Afghan partners are bearing the brunt of enemy attacks, although their cohesion remains strong. American and coalition cas-

ualties have significantly dropped, with casualties in 2013 being nearly a quarter of what they were in 2010.

The transition to Afghan Forces leading security operations in the summer of 2013 was a marked change in the campaign, which had coalition forces leading combat operations for the previous 12 years. Despite ISAF's early recognition that Afghanistan's security would depend on indigenous forces and coalition efforts beginning in 2002 to build an Afghan Security Force, progress was slow. In 2009, enabled by the U.S. troops surge ordered by President Obama, the coalition made a conscious effort to first grow ANSF numbers (quantity) and get them into the fight. This was then followed by an effort—which continues today—to develop ANSF enablers and professionalize the ranks (quality). As a result of this plan, the ANSF have grown to a force of nearly 350,000 soldiers, airmen, and police today. These forces are augmented by an additional 26,000 local police forces.

In 2010, coalition and Afghan Forces began conducting partnered operations, which developed combat capabilities and leadership skills from the tactical level on up. As a result of the ANSF's progress, President Obama and President Karzai agreed in January 2013 that Afghan Forces would take the lead for security nationwide at the Milestone 2013 ceremony on June 18, 2013. As the Afghan Forces stepped into the lead role for counterinsurgency operations, ISAF forces stepped back into a support role. This new role had coalition members serving as combat advisors to Afghan units to further develop tactical fighting skills and the integration of combined arms, such as artillery, mortars, and attack helicopters.

2013 Fighting Season

In their first fighting season in the lead, the ANSF proved capable of securing the Afghan people, fighting their own battles, and holding the gains achieved by ISAF over the last decade. Like the coalition forces who led operations the year prior, the ANSF successfully maintained control of all key terrain and populated areas. Today, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) remains in control of its 34 provincial capitals and all of its major cities. The majority of violence continues to take place away from populated areas, and polling shows the vast majority of Afghans hold a favorable view of their soldiers and police.

The ANSF consistently demonstrated tactical overmatch against the Taliban-led insurgency, and proved resilient in a tough fight. They independently planned, led and executed combined-arms operations. They improved cooperation across the Ministry of Interior (police), the Ministry of Defense (Army), and the National Directorate of Security (intelligence service). They generated an impressive operational tempo as they secured the Afghan people.

The ANSF's improving capabilities were demonstrated in large and complex combat operations across the country. In July, the ANSF launched Operation Semorgh in eastern Afghanistan. It was the largest Afghan air assault in history, followed by a two-pronged attack into the Azrah Valley. The 3-week operation—which involved the Afghan air force, the 201st and 203rd Army Corps, the 111th Capital Division, special operations, and police—began with Mi-35 attack helicopters escorting Mi-17s helicopters as they inserted 250 Afghan soldiers and 13,000 pounds of supplies. Afghan helicopters provided fire support and casualty evacuation while Afghan artillery and mortars provided surface fires in support of the ground force's movement through difficult, mountainous terrain. Despite insurgent attacks, bad weather, and the soldiers' fasting for Ramazan, the ANSF successfully cleared the valley of insurgents and secured the district center, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and voter registration materials. Once the operation was complete, Afghan police remained in the valley to provide for its long-term security. The ANSF independently planned, executed, and sustained the operation; ISAF only provided enabler support, such as close air support, casualty evacuation, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

Throughout the rest of the summer and winter, each of the six Afghan Army corps planned and executed multiple complex operations throughout the country with the support of the Afghan air force, special operations, and police. Highlights include the 205th Corps' Operation Chamtoo in southern Afghanistan, where they cleared almost 300 villages in 14 days with minimal casualties; in the process, they discovered and confiscated 1.5 tons of homemade explosives and more than 1,000 IEDs and components. The 207th Corps's Operation Abu Nasr Farahi in western Afghanistan cleared insurgents along Highway 1, protecting the Afghan people and securing a vital road for commercial and military needs. The 209th Corps' Operation Hindukush in northern Afghanistan cleared insurgent safe havens in the Warduj Valley. The 215th Corps' Operation Oqab in southwestern Afghanistan took the fight to insurgents in Sangin, demonstrating strong combined arms capabilities during clearing operations to deny insurgents safe haven.

The ANSF's growing capability was particularly evident during the Loya Jirga in November, when 3,000 Afghan leaders from around the country met in Kabul to discuss the U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA). Despite concerted efforts from the Haqqani Network and other insurgents to disrupt the Loya Jirga, the ANSF successfully secured the event without incident. This accomplishment was the result of extensive planning and integrated operations in Kabul, other major urban centers, and the key routes connecting them by the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, and the National Directorate of Security for weeks leading up to the event. This performance reflects a degree of coordination between the three different security pillars that simply didn't exist in early 2013.

Despite the ANSF's successes throughout the fighting season, they also faced several challenges. Due to existing capability gaps and shortfalls, the ANSF relied on ISAF for enabler support, particularly in the areas of close air support, casualty evacuation, logistics, counter-IED, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. The ANSF also suffered high casualties and instances of poor leadership, but impressively remained a cohesive and resilient fighting force.

On balance, after watching the ANSF respond to a variety of challenges over the past year, I do not believe the Taliban-led insurgency represents an existential threat to GIRoA or the ANSF. However, while the ANSF's performance shows they require less ISAF assistance in conducting security operations, they do need a great deal of help in developing the systems, the processes, and the institutions necessary to run a modern, professional army and police force.

ANSF Capability Gaps

ISAF forces are in the process of re-orienting from combat advising at the unit level to functionally-based advising at the Afghan security ministries, the six army corps, and the police zones. In this new role, advisors are focusing on tasks that will build the ANSF's long-term sustainability to make the progress that has been made to date enduring.

At the security ministries, advisors are focusing on building ministerial capacity in planning, programming, budgeting, and acquisition. Advisors are also working to improve integration between the different security pillars—army, police, and intelligence service—at all levels. In the fielded force, advisors will focus on capability gaps like the aviation, intelligence, and special operations. They will also focus on developmental shortfalls in areas like logistics, medical, and counter-IED. At all levels, our advisors will work to improve Afghan transparency and accountability of donor resources, and reduce casualties and overall attrition. In total, our shift to functionally-based advising is putting the ANSF on a path to sustainment.

Despite our advisory efforts in 2014, four capability gaps will remain after the ISAF mission ends. I assess that without the Resolute Support mission, the progress made to date will not be sustainable. A limited number of advisors will be required in 2015 to continue the train, advise, and assist mission. These advisors will address gaps in: (1) the aviation enterprise; (2) the intelligence enterprise; (3) special operations; and (4) the security ministries' capacity to conduct tasks such as planning, programming, budgeting, acquisition, and human resource management so they can provide tactical units the support they require to function. These advisors will put the Afghans on the path to sustainment that the Afghans can further develop after Resolute Support concludes.

In summary, although clear challenges exist along the security line of effort, I believe the physical capabilities and capacities of the ANSF will be sufficient to secure the election, to achieve transition in December, and—with a post-2014 advising mission—to provide for Afghanistan's long-term security. These collective efforts are hardening the Afghan state and giving it needed time to develop and mature. These efforts are also reducing the insurgency's operating space and incentivizing its participation in the peace process.

III. WHERE WE ARE—STATE OF THE THREAT

ISAF and Afghan Forces remain focused on denying safe haven to al Qaeda and keeping pressure on the extremist network to limit the operational ability of al Qaeda, the Haqqani Network, and other transnational and foreign military groups inside Afghanistan.

Sustained counterterrorism operations have prevented al Qaeda's use of the country as a platform for terrorism. Operations have restricted their permanent presence to isolated areas of northeastern Afghanistan and have resulted in only a seasonal presence in other parts of the country. These efforts have forced al Qaeda to focus on survival rather than on operations against the west. Counterterrorism pressure placed on al Qaeda—as well as the elimination of fighters and facilitators—has pre-

vented another attack on the homeland. Yet, continued operations are necessary to prevent al Qaeda from regenerating degraded capabilities.

Challenges remain despite this success, as the extremist network within Afghanistan has become more complex over the last decade. Where at one time al Qaeda could be isolated—as we intended to do in 2001—extremist networks have now expanded in the country. Increased cooperation and coordination can be seen between al Qaeda and other extremists like the Haqqani Network, Tahrik-e Taliban Pakistan, and Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The Haqqani Network remains the most virulent strain of the insurgency, the greatest risk to coalition forces, and a critical enabler of al Qaeda. The Haqqani Taliban also shares the Afghan Taliban's goals of expelling coalition forces, removing the Afghan Government, and re-establishing an Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. They lead the insurgency in three eastern Afghan provinces (Paktika, Paktiya, Khost) and have demonstrated the capability and intent to launch and support high profile and complex attacks against the coalition across the country. In response to several dangerous threat streams against coalition and Afghan personnel, ANSF and U.S. Special Operations Forces have expanded their security and counter-terrorism operations. These operations have successfully disrupted several dangerous threats streams that sought to inflict significant casualties on the force and break the coalition's will.

The Afghan Taliban also remain a potent and resilient threat. At the beginning of the 2013 fighting season, they outlined their operational objectives: seize and hold district centers, increase violence across the country, conduct insider and high profile attacks to garner media coverage, and crush the will of the ANSF in their first fighting season in the lead.

Despite their continued efforts, the Taliban made very limited progress in achieving these objectives and in exploiting ISAF's reduced troop presence to generate operational or strategic momentum. The Taliban were not able to hold terrain, crush the ANSF's spirit, or increase insider attacks and violence levels from 2012 when coalition forces led security operations. However, the Taliban were able to project violence into urban areas from rural safe havens, threaten freedom of movement along major highways, and contest government control in some areas. They were also able to conduct high profile attacks that negatively influenced Afghan and international community perceptions about security, and capitalize on the existing uncertainty surrounding the coalition's post-2014 mission. Despite these successes, recent polling data shows the Afghan population continues to widely reject the Taliban, challenging their ability to expand influence.

As we look to the remaining months of the ISAF campaign, we can expect the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and other extremists to attempt a higher operational tempo than in previous years to disrupt the political process and prevent the signing of the BSA. They will seek to increase propaganda, assassinations, and high profile attacks to create a perception of insecurity and weaken coalition cohesion. In response, ISAF will continue to support the ANSF as they continue a high rate of security operations to mitigate these threats.

While insurgent and terrorist threats have proved resilient, ISAF and ANSF operations have kept these groups at bay. Continued pressure will be required to prevent al Qaeda from regenerating degraded operations with the support of groups like the Haqqani Network. Continued pressure will also be required to address the broader extremist network in Afghanistan, which threatens the stability of the Nation as well as the broader region. The long-term solution to this challenge remains a capable and sustainable security establishment and responsive institutions of civil governance that together can secure the Nation and prevent the re-emergence of al Qaeda safe havens. Continued international support in both of these areas will be essential to GIRoA's long-term capacity to govern and serve as a security partner in the region.

IV. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Partnership with GIRoA

Despite political challenges, the fundamental partnership between ISAF and the ANSF remains strong. Coalition and Afghan leaders retain a positive day-to-day relationship and continue to work together in pursuit of shared strategic objectives. Afghan Government, civil, and military leaders demonstrate a growing appreciation for the coalition's efforts; these leaders are genuine in their gratitude for our shared sacrifice over the last decade. I have also seen our Afghan partners develop a growing sense of ownership and pride in their army and police force. Over the last year, Afghans have begun to realize that they have credible security forces that can protect them. However, the Afghan people still desire continued and broader inter-

national support, as evidenced by the Loya Jirga's endorsement of the BSA and widespread popular sentiment among Afghans for a signed BSA.

Narrative

Uncertainty continues to exist throughout Afghan society and within the ANSF about the United States' and the international community's commitment to Afghanistan post-2014. Absent confidence and hope for a brighter future, many Afghans are planning for the worst. Numerous reports cite the depreciation of Afghan currency, plunging real estate prices, capital flight, and young, well-educated Afghans trying to emigrate. This uncertainty, and a subsequent fear of abandonment, spurs hedging behavior by Afghan power brokers. Uncertainty also spurs hedging by regional actors. These behaviors have a corrosive effect on Afghan confidence and the broader campaign, and they distract attention from issues important to Afghanistan's future, such as good governance and economic development.

The Taliban continue to capitalize on these challenges and leverage the information environment to advance a narrative of coalition abandonment. In fact, the Taliban's failure to achieve their operational intent in 2013 was partially offset by their effectiveness in negatively influencing public perceptions about security and the future. In addition to undermining Afghan confidence and advancing a narrative that they are chasing coalition forces out of Afghanistan, the Taliban ranks continue to gain strength from their belief that all coalition forces will depart Afghanistan at the end of the year.

I believe a signed BSA and NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) will address the Afghan people's concerns and damage the Taliban's confidence. These documents—combined with clarity on the post-2014 mission and associated financial commitments from the Chicago Summit and Tokyo Conference—will significantly enhance Afghan confidence and erode our enemy's will. While the information environment is a challenge today, I believe it can be turned around.

In the meantime, we are working to mitigate the risk that uncertainty poses to the relationship between the ANSF and the coalition. We are communicating our commitment through both actions and words, and are expressing our confidence in the ANSF's ability to secure the election and the Afghan people post-2014. We are also working to ensure they know how proud we are of our relationship—a relationship built on trust and a common vision for a stable, secure, and unified Afghanistan.

Insider Threat

Although insider attacks against ISAF forces in 2013 declined sharply from 2012, they remain a focus area for our force protection. Thus far, these attacks have not significantly affected the strong relationship between coalition and ANSF personnel, particularly in the field where they face a common enemy every day. ISAF is cautiously optimistic that the mitigation measures applied over the previous year are working. These measures have reduced, but not eliminated, the threat. We remain vigilant to prevent future insider attacks.

Attrition

A high attrition rate, particularly in the Afghan National Army, continues to pose challenges to force development. The main causes of attrition are assessed as high operational tempo, sustained risk, soldier care/quality of life, and leave issues. Afghan casualties have also increased since the ANSF took the lead for security last June.

While combat losses comprise a relatively small percentage of ANSF attrition numbers, reducing ANSF casualties remains both a top moral and operational priority for ISAF and ANSF leaders. Several factors in addition to enemy action contributed to casualties in the 2013 fighting season, such as shortfalls in medical care and casualty evacuation. We are aggressively addressing these shortfalls in several ways: the introduction of combat lifesaver skills and medical kits so soldiers can give self aid and buddy aid at the point of injury, the use of Mi-17 helicopters for casualty evacuation, and improved Afghan medical capabilities and long-term care. Reducing casualties also depends on the ANSF's warfighting capability, which ranges from a commander's competency to a unit's ability to integrate combined arms. ANSF leaders are working hard to improve these areas.

Although the overall attrition rate is high, it has not impacted combat readiness, as the ANSF remains sustainable in numerical terms due to robust recruitment. However, if the current attrition rate persists, it could have an adverse effect on the long-term quality of the ANSF. Urgent action is therefore being taken to address the root causes of attrition beyond combat casualties, and to develop a culture of accountable leadership in the ANSF. In particular, ANSF senior leadership has

established a Joint Attrition Working Group and an Absent Without Leave Prevention Committee to identify and mitigate its causes.

Af-Pak Military to Military Relationship

Security within Afghanistan and Pakistan remains interdependent, and requires a cooperative effort between the two nations. Cooperation is necessary to address the common threat of extremism, mitigate the risk of violence on the Afghan-Pakistani border, and give Afghans and their neighbors confidence in the future. Another challenge involves enemy sanctuary in Pakistan, which is a major factor preventing ISAF's decisive defeat of the Afghan insurgency in the near term. To advance stability, ISAF continues to play a facilitator role in pursuit of a constructive and effective relationship between the Afghan and Pakistani militaries.

In the past year, positive political developments have provided space for the Afghanistan-Pakistan military relationship to grow. These developments include visits between President Karzai and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, their participation in tripartite meetings in London and Ankara, and Pakistan's support to an Afghan-led reconciliation process. As a result, ISAF was able to facilitate trilateral engagements at the senior military level that augmented a growing bilateral relationship at lower levels. However, progress remains fragile. Minor issues—as demonstrated by a border incident in December—can quickly stall gains in the bilateral relationship. However, the absence of publicity and unhelpful rhetoric during the December incident reflects a change to the status quo and signals the potential for continued progress.

Stewardship of Resources

Stewardship of taxpayer dollars is a priority for USFOR-A, and is critical to keeping the trust and confidence of the American people. Yet, war is an inherently inefficient and challenging endeavor, and despite the dedicated efforts of many, cases exist over the years where American resources were not spent as efficiently as possible. USFOR-A takes seriously our obligation to protect taxpayer dollars, and is working hard to ensure both wise spending and the identification of areas for cost savings or avoidance.

In 2013, USFOR-A developed a 5-step process to increase checks and balances and improve the planning, execution, and oversight of resources. This process mandates a continuous and rigorous review of all requirements (e.g., Afghan Security Force Funds, Military Construction, Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund, Commander's Emergency Response Program) based on changes in the mission and operating environment. Requirements are scrutinized and subsequently validated, de-obligated, or rescoped based on input from relevant stakeholders. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014 (to date), these efforts have resulted in cost savings and avoidance of more than \$5 billion. USFOR-A has also welcomed and incorporated into our processes independent agencies' recommendations for improvement, which have proven most helpful when released in time to effect change.

USFOR-A will continue to scrutinize every dollar spent to ensure spending is necessary to mission success and results in the desired effect. This approach applies equally to post-2014 ANSF funding that was committed at the Chicago Summit.

V. MILESTONES AND MAJOR EVENTS

Presidential Election

ISAF is decisively engaged in supporting the ANSF as they plan for the security of Afghanistan's presidential election on April 5th. The presidential election will serve as a defining moment in the campaign, as it will usher in the Nation's first democratic and peaceful transfer of power. ISAF understands that an election process that is inclusive, transparent and credible will be critical to the long-term partnership between Afghanistan, the United States, and the international community. Successful political transition will also be critical to meet a precondition for continued donor resources, as outlined in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.

To ensure a secure environment that will both encourage and facilitate voter participation, ISAF is supporting the Ministry of Interior, which has lead responsibility for election security, and the Ministry of Defense and the National Directorate of Security, which are in support. ISAF assistance involves planning, logistical and operational support requested by, and in coordination with, GIRoA and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). ISAF is also prepared to provide in extremis security support if needed. Throughout the election process, ISAF will remain a neutral player.

To reduce the risk of an election delay, ISAF is currently supporting the movement of election materials throughout the country. While the IEC and ANSF are transporting election materials to 98 percent of election locations (e.g., regional

hubs, provincial centers, district centers, and polling centers), the Afghan Government has requested limited assistance from ISAF due to security conditions, weather conditions, and the volume of election materials that need to be moved. ISAF assistance includes providing enablers—such as intelligence and air support—to the Afghan Forces as they transport materials to 19 locations. ISAF is also directly moving materials to 4 regional distribution hubs, 5 provincial centers, and 17 districts. During air and ground movements by ANSF and ISAF forces, election materials have been and will remain under IEC control and custody.

My confidence in the ANSF's ability to secure the election is based on several factors. First, the ANSF have already facilitated a successful, nationwide voter registration process. Their performance during the fighting season and the Loya Jirga also serves as a positive indicator for the election. Second, there will be more forces providing security than during the 2009 election. Then, there were approximately 250,000 coalition and Afghan Forces securing the election. In April, there will be approximately 425,000 troops, of which 375,000 will be Afghan. Third, ANSF planning efforts are well ahead of where they were in 2009 and include several rehearsal exercises to prepare for the historic event.

Posturing the Force

As ISAF looks to December, two campaign imperatives guide our actions. First, we are taking steps to reduce risk and ensure a smooth transition to the Resolute Support mission. We are also focused on maintaining simultaneity in the campaign by building ANSF sustainability while providing support to the ANSF as they prepare for the election and the fighting season.

To focus our efforts, ISAF has divided 2014 into three phases with specific outcomes. On March 1, we completed our first phase. This phase saw us continuing to transition from combat advising to functionally-based advising, and working with the ANSF to disrupt high profile threats. Concurrently, we executed 50 tasks to increase Afghan readiness, such as improving vehicle maintenance and stocking ammunition supplies. These tasks will help the ANSF operate throughout the election and fighting season without taking an operational pause or reaching a point where their operations are disrupted or halted due to lack of logistical support.

In the second phase of 2014, from now to July, we'll complete the transition to functionally-based advising. This will facilitate the arrival of ISAF's final troop rotation in July and will begin what we conceptually view as Phase 0 of Resolute Support. In the third and final phase, from August to December, we'll finish posturing the force to ensure a smooth transition to the post-2014 mission.

ISAF's retrograde and redeployment efforts remain on track or ahead of schedule. U.S. troops in theater number fewer than 34,000—well below the 100,000 U.S. troops at the height of the surge. By December 31, U.S. Forces will be at the post-2014 number decided by President Obama. As forces have redeployed, ISAF has closed, descaled, or transferred tactical infrastructure—ranging from large bases to small combat outposts—to the Afghans. Coalition bases and outposts now number less than 90, from a height of more than 850 in 2012. In December, we'll be at our Resolute Support number. In terms of materiel reduction, fewer than 10,000 U.S. vehicles not needed for the post-2014 mission will be returned to the military services. This is down from a high of more than 40,000 vehicles in June 2012. To provide context, during the summer—and in the middle of the fighting season—we moved 6,000 vehicles.

Post-2014 Mission

In anticipation of a signed BSA and NATO SOFA, ISAF continues to plan for the Resolute Support train, advise, assist mission. This mission will focus on the four capability gaps at the operational/institutional and strategic levels of the ANSF that will remain at the end of the ISAF mission: (1) Afghan security institution capacity; (2) the aviation enterprise; (3) the intelligence enterprise; and (4) special operations. In accordance with NATO guidance, ISAF is planning on a limited regional approach with 8,000–12,000 coalition personnel employed in Kabul and the four corners of Afghanistan. Advisors will address capability gaps at the Afghan security ministries, army corps, and police zones, before eventually transitioning to a Kabul-centric approach focused on the Afghan ministries and institutions. Due to delays in the completion of the BSA, and at the recent direction of NATO, we will begin planning for various contingencies in Afghanistan while still continuing to plan for Resolute Support.

VI. WHAT WINNING LOOKS LIKE

Despite the remaining challenges in the campaign, we remain focused on winning in Afghanistan—as defined below. Its key components include:

- The transition of security responsibility to a confident, self-reliant and sustainable ANSF capable of protecting the population and securing a legitimate Afghan Government;
- An operationally ineffective al Qaeda deprived of safe haven from which to plan and conduct operations outside the area;
- An acceptable political transition following an election viewed as inclusive, transparent, and credible by the Afghan people and the international community; and Afghan Government adherence to the Mutual Accountability Framework; and
- A constructive Afghanistan-Pakistan military to military relationship.

On December 31, we will reach the end of the ISAF combat mission. Until then, USFOR-A and ISAF will be focused on maximizing the time left to advance the campaign. While work remains after 2014—such as building ANSF sustainability—the components of winning can largely be achieved by the end of the year. I am confident in our ability to effect full security transition in December. I am certain that counterterrorism operations by American and Afghan Forces will continue to deprive al Qaeda of safe haven. I am optimistic that political transition will successfully take place. I believe we are on track to develop a constructive military to military relationship between the Afghanistan and Pakistan militaries that can be a foundational element in a broader partnership between the two countries. In the remaining months of the campaign, American and coalition personnel will work to achieve these goals.

When the men and women of USFOR-A and ISAF depart Afghanistan this December, they will depart knowing their hard work and sacrifice—and that of those who came before them—have not only built a capable Afghan Security Force, have not only given the Afghan people the opportunity to determine a future of their own, but have also enhanced our collective security and kept the American people safe. That is what winning will look like.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much for your testimony and again for your service, and for all those with whom you work.

We have, I think, six votes scheduled at 10:30 a.m. We have asked if they can be delayed. Another committee is in the same situation. We don't know that that will be the case. So what we'll do is we'll have a 6-minute first round to get as many of us in as possible before the vote. But there will still be many of us who will have to work around these votes, as we did, I believe, yesterday or the day before yesterday, and we did it very successfully. So we'll all do the best we can. Let's start with 6 minutes.

General, what is the latest date that we can wait in order to find out if there's going to be a BSA, in other words, the date that we must actually begin to implement a total withdrawal if there's not going to be a BSA?

General DUNFORD. Mr. Chairman, I'll address that first from just the military perspective. Whether there would be a withdrawal at the end of 2014 or whether we would maintain a mission across Afghanistan in a regional approach at the end of 2014, I wouldn't do anything different between now and July. We've stabilized the force to support the elections in April and we have plenty of flexibility to be able to adjust to either eventuality in July.

Beginning in July, we have manageable risks during the months of July and August, and then I would assess the risk of an orderly withdrawal begins to be high in September, and that's simply a function of the tasks that have to be accomplished and how many days it needs to accomplish those tasks.

But I would quickly add that what concerns me most about the delay in the BSA is not the physics of the retrograde or the redeployment of forces. It's the uncertainty that exists inside of Afghanistan with the Afghan people, the uncertainty with the Afghan Forces, the hedging behavior that we see in the region, and as im-

portantly, and I think something we need to be very attentive to in the coming months, the coalition cohesion and ensuring that at the end of these several months of uncertainty we still have a coalition going into 2015.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General Dunford, I understand you've presented a range of options to the White House for the size of a post-2014 military presence of our forces as part of a coalition to train, advise, and assist the Afghans. Can you tell us what range of U.S. troops you would be comfortable with for a post-2014 military presence?

General DUNFORD. Mr. Chairman, for over a year we've used the guidance that we received at the defense ministerial in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in February 2013 as our primary planning guidance. That guidance called for a force of 8,000 to 12,000 NATO forces to provide train, advise, and assist at the Afghan corps level. I'm comfortable with that range and our ability to accomplish the train and advise mission with that allocation of forces. Then over and above that, we have always assumed on the U.S. side that there would be additional thousands of forces to conduct counterterrorism operations.

Chairman LEVIN. You're talking about an additional few thousand, is that correct?

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Of the 8,000 to 12,000 NATO range, two-thirds of them would be U.S. Forces?

General DUNFORD. As a general rule, Mr. Chairman, we have provided two-thirds of the NATO force.

Chairman LEVIN. You've already characterized the performance of the ANSF in 2013. Can you give us your overall assessment? You said that they were able to maintain the security that had been present in the previous summer when we were mainly in control and they did that, although they were now in control in 2013. Would you say that that control was successful? How would you give a general military characterization?

General DUNFORD. Mr. Chairman, I'd start with the summer itself. The Taliban came out in the spring and articulated their objectives for the spring, and we can say at the end of the summer that the Taliban were unsuccessful in accomplishing their objectives as a result of the performance of the ANSF.

But there's been a couple of recent events that really highlight the ability of the Afghan Forces and the progress that they have made over the last few years. The loya jirga that was conducted in November is a good example, where thousands of people met in Kabul from around the country. The city was locked down. The event was conducted without a single security incident, and we know that the Taliban and the Haqqani network, in particular, had every intent of disrupting that particular event.

Just last week, there was an event in Ghasni Province with over 6,000 people celebrating the Islamic festival. People from throughout the region came. The Afghan Forces coordinated their efforts. The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense conducted that event without a security incident as well. We also know from the intelligence that the enemy had every intent of disrupting that event.

What we have seen increasingly is Afghan Forces that are capable of assuming the lead. We no longer conduct any unilateral operations except for our own security, our own sustainment, and retrograde. All other operations in Afghanistan are conducted by ANSF.

But I would say that the most significant thing that I've seen since I've been there is the sense of responsibility and accountability of Afghan leaders, and also the pride and the confidence that the people of Afghan have in their ANSF, and I think that's been one of the biggest second order effects as a result of the transition that took place last June.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

A recent independent study by the Center for Naval Analyses concluded the following about the size of the ANSF that would be needed, and their assessment is that, based on the likely security conditions after 2014 in Afghanistan, the security forces should be maintained near their current size of around 374,000—that includes army, national police, and the Afghan local police—at least through 2018. Do you agree with that assessment?

General DUNFORD. Mr. Chairman, I do, and that Center for Naval Analyses study is consistent with some work that we've done over the last 2 or 3 years with the Center of Army Analyses and also our own internal assessments.

Chairman LEVIN. I do, too, and I think it is really important that we provide that support. It's different from what was decided on at NATO a year or 2 ago. It's higher. But your testimony on that, I think, will help us to maintain a force of that size.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dunford, yesterday in my office you talked about the difference between transition and withdrawal. Would you like to share that with us?

General DUNFORD. Senator Inhofe, we're in the process now of transitioning to ANSF assuming full responsibility for security at the end of 2014. In my mind that gives us the best prospects for success and allows us to achieve the ends that we outlined some years ago and which are articulated in my opening statement.

A transition to me means finishing the job of allowing the Afghan Forces to assume responsibility and supporting the political transition that will begin in earnest with the elections this April and obviously continue to the parliamentary elections in 2015. A withdrawal in my mind means abandoning the people of Afghanistan, abandoning the endeavor that we've been on for the last decade, and then providing al Qaeda the space within which to begin again to plan and conduct operations against the West.

Senator INHOFE. Would it be very similar then as the Iraq situation?

General DUNFORD. I think that's fair to say, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. One of the difficult things that's so intangible is when we talk about what would have happened if we hadn't done what we've done. I'm thinking a lot of the times the National Security Agency information will be directly linked to something that was planned in this country, like the New York City subway stuff and the jet storage field. We can identify that. You and I talked about this. Just from a military perspective, from your ob-

servation, would you say that our actions could have prevented another September 11 type of attack on this country?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I don't think there's any doubt that al Qaeda has an intent to once again attack the West and to use the Afghan-Pakistan region from which to make that attack. I also don't think there's any doubt that the pressure that we have had on the network over the past 10 years in particular has prevented them from doing that.

Senator INHOFE. I believe that, but a lot of the people don't. I think it's important that we, and that you in the military, talk about observations, what could have happened and what are we doing that is perhaps not as noticeable today as it should be.

I can remember in the beginning with the Afghans, because it happens that one of our Guard units, the 45th, was over there helping in the training, so I've watched them as time has gone by. The statement that has been made that the ANSF is very effective, but is not fully developed, what does that mean, "not fully developed"?

General DUNFORD. Senator, today the Afghan Forces are doing the fighting. They're providing security to the Afghan people. What they don't have are the systems, the processes, and institutions that allow them to be self-sustaining. At the ministerial level that includes things like planning, programming, budgeting, and acquisition. It's simple things like getting parts distributed, pay systems, fuel, overseeing contracts. We call that the functions that allow them to be self-sustaining.

So we're providing a degree of advice and assistance today that's different than what we were doing in the past. When the Afghans were not in the lead, we were partnering with them or we were providing combat advising. Now we're helping them develop those systems and processes that allow them to be self-sustaining when we reduce to a much smaller presence.

Senator INHOFE. We're doing that without putting our people in harm's way, as it was in the past when we were having to take the lead.

General DUNFORD. In a far different way, Senator. Clearly we're still in a combat zone and our people are in harm's way, but the risk is increasingly being assumed by ANSF.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General, for your service and the service of the forces that you command.

A great deal hangs on this election that is forthcoming. Can you give us an indication of the ability of the ANSF to protect the election process in April, and also whether there will likely be a runoff? When will the election process conclude?

General DUNFORD. Senator, thanks for that question. Months ago the ANSF began to plan security for the elections and they're probably 5 or 6 months ahead of where they were in 2009. I think one of the best indicators for what we'll see for security at the elections took place last summer when the Afghans were in the lead, during

the registration process. I mentioned the security they provided to the loya jirga. I also mentioned the security they provided to the Islamic festival. Those are all indicators of the capability of the Afghans to actually provide security.

One interesting statistic is that during the elections of 2009 there were about 250,000 people in uniform. That's a combination of coalition forces and Afghan Forces that were providing security during that period of time. On the 5th of April of this year, there will be 425,000 forces providing security for the elections, 375,000 of which will be Afghan. So I think that's a very strong indicator, not only their performance over the past several months, but also just their inherent capabilities that will be on display on the 5th of April of this year.

If there's a runoff, our best assessment is that we would have a new president in August 2014.

Senator REED. So that falls within that period of time when you're still capable of making a transition or going from several options. Operationally, you still have that flexibility?

General DUNFORD. We do, Senator.

Senator REED. You've indicated several times in testimony about the positive public opinion and support for the ANSF. Can you give us an indication of why, if that's the case? Also, will that translate to support of the Government of Afghanistan? There are situations where armies might have support or security forces, but it doesn't translate.

General DUNFORD. Senator, we really began to see the change back in June when we celebrated what was known as Milestone 2013. That's when the ANSF assumed the lead. I can remember in particular one conversation I had with former Defense Minister Wardak, a big burly man who had been a jihadi. You probably have met him. During that ceremony he leaned over to me almost with tears in his eyes and he said: "General, you have no idea what it means to once again be responsible for the security of your own country, and I want to thank you and the American people for making this possible."

We have seen through the summer as the Afghan people saw their young men and women providing security, increasing pride. We set out last spring; we laid out our campaign objectives. We said we wanted to emerge from the summer with confident and capable Afghan Forces, but as importantly, credible in the eyes of the Afghan people. The polling data certainly indicates that, where consistently over 80 percent of the Afghan people have a positive assessment of the ANSF, the army in particular.

Just recently, we had a pretty sad incident take place in the Kunar Province where 21 Afghan Forces were killed. That negative was turned into a positive in the wake of that event. The outpouring of pride and support for Afghan Forces, the desire to take care of the families of the fallen, the outrage that the Afghan people felt that their soldiers had been attacked by the Taliban, was actually a great indicator of the developing nationalism inside of Afghanistan, the pride that the Afghan people have in their country, but as importantly, the pride they have in the Afghan Forces.

That clearly has had a positive effect on the Afghan Forces themselves, because if the people are proud of them and what they do

and they appreciate and recognize what they do and the sacrifices they make, they're more encouraged to actually do that.

So, Senator, as I mentioned a minute ago, there's a lot of things we can point to physically in terms of Afghan capability development. We can look at helicopters, we can look at Mobile Strike Force Vehicles (MSFV), we can look at weapons systems, we can look at their tactics, techniques, and procedures. All those things are positive. But the human factors are as important, and what I have seen again in the leadership is a sense of pride, sense of responsibility, sense of accountability. But amongst the Afghan people what I've seen is a sense of ownership of Afghan Forces.

You ask, does that translate into support for the Afghan Government? Interesting enough, about 80 percent of the Afghan people have confidence that the Afghan Government is heading in the right direction, and 52 percent of them actually believe that things over the last year have improved. That's high when you look at, I think, a comparable statistic, in the United States right now is about 37 percent. So there's actually a greater degree of confidence that they're moving in the right direction inside of Afghanistan right now, and we're encouraged by that.

Senator REED. General, my time is all but expired, but for the record if you could indicate to us your estimate of how long the residual force will stay, if there is a BSA concluded to the satisfaction of both sides? Unless you can give a very brief answer, you can take that for the record.

General DUNFORD. Senator, it's a little more complicated, so I'd like to take that for the record.

Senator REED. Then take it for the record, sir.

General DUNFORD. Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

With the strategic partnership between the United States and Afghanistan reinforced with a bilateral security agreement (BSA), I am confident the bulk of our residual force would return home by the end of 2016. This additional 2-year period will allow us to ensure our years of support are reinforced with a focused train, advise, and assist effort, as well as enhanced development of the Afghan Security Ministries. The BSA will demonstrate our mutual commitment and advance our efforts.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Reed.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I thank you for your service. A great source of pride to all of us is your service and that of your predecessors in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we appreciate your incredible service.

General, we've heard from several officials from the Department of Defense (DOD) attempting to characterize the status of al Qaeda in Afghanistan, the region, and worldwide. We've heard words like "metastasizing" and "persistent." How would you describe al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan?

General DUNFORD. Senator, today, and because of largely our Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the pressure that we have put on the network over the last few years, I would characterize al Qaeda in Afghanistan as in a survival mode.

Senator MCCAIN. General Allen stated last year that he would need 20,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan after 2014. Now, as I understand it, we're down to 10,000 plus a few thousand NATO

troops. Could you state how many troops we need and for how long?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I'm comfortable with that range that we talked about earlier in terms of the NATO 8,000 to 12,000 for a train, advise, and assist mission, with another mission over and above that that would conduct counterterrorism. That would be a U.S. mission only. I think what's important when we start to talk about numbers is what we expect those forces to do has evolved over time as the Afghan Forces have increased their capability. What we'll be doing in 2015 largely is addressing the self-sustainability of the Afghan Forces. They will clearly be in the lead in the fight and the only operations that I would envision us conducting in 2015 against an enemy would be counterterrorism operations, again a U.S. mission.

Senator MCCAIN. But it is your view it would be 10,000 plus several thousand NATO troops?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I'm comfortable with the range of forces, that 8,000 to 12,000 NATO mission plus a counterterrorism mission on top of that.

Senator MCCAIN. According to a Wall Street Journal report from January 21, it cited a senior DOD official stating, "The new plan would start with 10,000 American troops at the beginning of 2015, but the number would decline sharply under a 2-year drawdown schedule. The number would be close to zero by the time Mr. Obama leaves office in early 2017."

In your professional military opinion, does this course of action entail a level of risk to our mission that you would find acceptable?

General DUNFORD. Senator, we have provided the President with a range of options. All those options have articulated conditions that would have to be met over time and the risk associated with not meeting those conditions.

Senator MCCAIN. Would you say it's a very high risk if we had a "sharp decline," "sharply under a 2-year drawdown schedule," so it would be close to zero by the time Mr. Obama leaves office in early 2017?

General DUNFORD. Senator, that would depend on the progress of the ANSF and the environment within which they'd be operating.

Senator MCCAIN. So you are not willing to state whether there would be an increased risk or not?

General DUNFORD. There would be increased risk, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

I can only speak for myself, but if that's the plan, that we would be close to zero by the time Mr. Obama leaves office in early 2017, I would not support keeping troops behind, because it would be a needless risk of American lives.

We all know that you can't deal any further with President Karzai, right, on the BSA?

General DUNFORD. I think that's fair to say, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. But we also know that all of the presidential candidates favor a BSA and say they would sign it; is that correct?

General DUNFORD. Senator, all the candidates do and the overwhelming majority of the Afghan people also support the BSA.

Senator MCCAIN. You are capable and ready to make plans for the signing of that BSA sometime after the presidential election? You are capable of adjusting to that eventuality?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. But it would be much harder if there's a runoff?

General DUNFORD. It would be much harder if there's a runoff. If we have a new president by August, I'm comfortable that we'll be able to maintain the options through that period of time without any difficulty.

Senator MCCAIN. It's very disturbing to me to hear the President say that the longer Karzai waits the lower the number of troops will be. I don't get that connection. Why would Karzai's intransigence dictate the number of troops and missions that we would want as part of the residual force?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I can't talk to that.

Senator MCCAIN. I'm sure you can't.

So are we able to get out all the equipment that we need to get out of Afghanistan on schedule?

General DUNFORD. I'm absolutely confident we'll be able to do that, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Even if the Russians cut off one of the avenues?

General DUNFORD. Yes, Senator. Due to the great efforts by U.S. Transportation Command and U.S. Central Command, we have resilience in the system and I'm not concerned at all about a loss of the Russian Northern Distribution Network, the Russian piece of that.

Senator MCCAIN. Are you confident with the level left behind of, say, 10,000 plus some NATO forces, that the Afghan military will have capability such as air evacuation, close air support, and especially intelligence capabilities?

General DUNFORD. Senator, two of the things you mentioned are actually gaps that will exist in 2015. The Afghan Air Force won't be fully developed. The intelligence enterprise won't be fully developed. Their special operations capability won't be fully developed. They'll still have gaps in their ministerial capacity. Those are the four main areas we'll be focused on in 2015.

Senator MCCAIN. So in your view, if we left Afghanistan with no residual force, we could see a replay of the Iraq scenario?

General DUNFORD. Senator, if we leave at the end of 2014, the ANSF will begin to deteriorate. The security environment will begin to deteriorate, and I think the only debate is the pace of that deterioration.

Senator MCCAIN. I thank you, General. I just want to say again, you're in a long line of really outstanding leaders and all of us are very proud of the service that you have rendered and continue to render to our country.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Now Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General Dunford. Again, as everyone has alluded to, we're very appreciative of your service.

This war has defined a whole generation of Americans and we have reached a decision point in the conflict, and we owe the American people an awful lot of explanations. I know Senator McCain was just talking about the transition that's going on and you talked about the amount of time that you would need if there is a new elected president and going in a different direction.

It doesn't look like Karzai's going to release his hold whatsoever. So he remains to be a force for a long time. I don't see how anything would ever change, knowing his intentions and being telegraphed as well as they are. Do you acknowledge that?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I acknowledge President Karzai's intent to remain influential in Afghanistan. But I also look at all the presidential candidates who have very strongly and very publicly articulated the need for a U.S. coalition presence after 2014, but am actually more encouraged by my day-to-day engagement with the Afghan people and the polling that we have done, where 80 percent of the Afghan people recognize that their future is inextricably linked to a presence of coalition and U.S. Forces.

Senator MANCHIN. It has the appearance of a Russia-Putin model.

General DUNFORD. Senator, that may or may not be President Karzai's intent. I don't know. But I'm not sure that reflects his capability.

Senator MANCHIN. Let me speak to this, then. I've been very critical about the amount of contractors we have, and I understand right now we have 78,000 contractors in Afghanistan and only 33,000 troops.

General DUNFORD. Senator, a number of the contractors also support the NATO force of about 45,000 total forces.

Senator MANCHIN. Can you tell me that contracting with those forces will be reduced relative to the combat forces?

General DUNFORD. We would be over time reducing. In fact, we're in the process now of reducing contractors. I think we've reduced them some 50 percent over the past 12 months.

Senator MANCHIN. The other thing, I understand we have about 2,000 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles in Afghanistan at \$1 million apiece, \$20 billion worth of MRAP vehicles?

General DUNFORD. We still have on the ground 2,000 MRAP vehicles that are being used. Are you referring to the ones that we have declared excess?

Senator MANCHIN. It's hard for people in West Virginia, and for me to go home and explain to them how we can build something that costs that much, take it over there, and just disregard it like it wasn't any value at all. There has to be value somewhere.

General DUNFORD. Senator, we're not discarding 2,000 MRAP vehicles. We have about 1,200 right now that the Services have declared as excess to their requirements.

Senator MANCHIN. What will happen with those?

General DUNFORD. We're in the process right now of seeing if there are any of our allies that can use those vehicles. The Services are also going back to review those requirements. I've put a stop on any destruction of vehicles except those that are battle damaged.

One of the challenges, Senator, is that if we want to give them to somebody they have to accept them as is, where is. So it's very expensive for countries to take those vehicles from Afghanistan. It costs us less than \$10,000 to destroy a vehicle. It would cost us over \$50,000 to move a vehicle to another location. So in order for us to give it to somebody else, we'd have to invest a significant amount of money to move the vehicles.

Senator MANCHIN. But if we're drawn into another conflict, we'd have to spend a million dollars to replace it.

General DUNFORD. Senator, the Services again have identified the requirements that they believe they'll need for future conflicts, and the majority of the MRAP vehicles that we purchased are already back in the United States, not in Afghanistan.

Senator MANCHIN. Sir, can you honestly tell the American people, can you tell the people in West Virginia, that we should be in Afghanistan and stay in Afghanistan, it's our purpose to do that? Our mission was to fight al Qaeda, to fight the terrorists, not to rebuild that nation or change the culture of that nation.

I have trouble explaining to West Virginians, and we're a very hawkish State. We like a good fight and sometimes if there's not a good fight we'll fight each other just to stay in practice and get ready for the next fight. This one makes no sense to any West Virginian at all, not anywhere I go in my State.

General DUNFORD. Senator, I would assess that if we don't stay there, continue the job of growing the Afghan Forces so they can replace us in providing security in Afghanistan, we'll actually have a good fight.

Senator MANCHIN. What's the casualties right now between green on blue?

General DUNFORD. We had 14 incidents of insider attacks during 2013. We had 48 in 2012.

Senator MANCHIN. Sir, it's unbelievable. I attended a Wounded Warrior dinner and talked to a young man. It didn't look like he'd been injured. I thought he was one of the support staff. He was very distant, and when I started talking to him he began to engage more. His story, it tore me apart. He says: "I was shot, I was shot by the person I trained for 6 months."

They live in this constant fear, and you're saying it's going to get better and we have to get them to a higher level? I don't think we're ever going to change that mentality. I don't know, sir. I have all the respect in the world, but I don't know how we answer these types of questions.

General DUNFORD. Senator, when I look at where we were in 2009, the very first trip I made to Afghanistan, there was 10 of us to 1 member of the ANSF. The ratio now is completely inverse. With a very small presence that we have today and we continue to have after 2015, we're going to ensure that the investment that we have made in blood and treasure over the past 12 years actually results in us achieving our objectives of a stable, secure, unified Afghanistan from which we cannot be attacked.

Senator MANCHIN. Let me just ask one final question, sir. Are we to tell the American people, and I'm to tell the West Virginian citizens, that we have to maintain a constant presence from now into

perpetuity, as we have done in Korea? Is this what Afghanistan is turning into?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I wouldn't assess that to be the case. Senator MANCHIN. So you think there's a time that we can exit? General DUNFORD. I absolutely do believe that.

Senator MANCHIN. I'm saying if 13 years haven't done the job, how many more years do you think it'll take? That's the question I cannot answer. We're just basically saying, if you can't do the job in 13 years, you're not going to get the job done.

General DUNFORD. Senator, I would assume because we have vital national interests in the region that the United States would be engaged in the region for a long period of time to come. The nature of our engagement and the nature of our presence would, of course, change over time.

Senator MANCHIN. Again, sir, thank you so much for your service. I just would respectfully disagree. Thank you, sir.

General DUNFORD. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Thank you. General, thank you for your service. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your service, too.

It's not hard to understand how my friend from West Virginia could have the view that he has. I must say that I disagree most vigorously with the point of view that he has just set forth in his questions. I think it's remarkable, and I hope people listening today in the United States, on Capitol Hill, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and any place where we have interests, I hope people are listening to the chairman of this committee, who made a profoundly remarkable opening statement, which I'd like to refer to.

Frankly, I'd say to my colleagues who have a different view, there's a frustration on the part of our chairman that the American people haven't been given a balanced view about the success we've had in Afghanistan and a balanced view about the American interests that we will continue to have, regardless of what the decision of this administration is going forward over the next few months.

The chairman in his opening statement today regrets that a plurality of Americans believe that sending our forces to Afghanistan was a mistake. General, I don't think we should forget what happened in 2001. We went into Afghanistan by a virtually unanimous vote of this Congress. I was in the House of Representatives at the time. There was one dissenting vote in the House of Representatives, and as far as I know, Mr. Chairman, it was unanimous here in the Senate.

Now, I'm not going to say that every decision that has been made since we went in in early 2001 has been correct. But I do think it's remarkable, as the chairman has pointed out, a recent public opinion poll in Afghanistan shows that a large majority of Afghans believe that conditions in the country have improved over the last decade.

While the American people are not being given the entire picture of the success story there, the Afghan people see it on the ground. I think that's reflected by the vote of the loya jirga.

Tell me, General, is the loya jirga some sort of elite group that represents only a section of the country or is it pretty much of a

cross-section? Enlighten the committee about how many factions, tribes, and ethnic groups were represented by the loya jirga?

General DUNFORD. Senator, it was over 2,000 participants from all of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan. All the tribes were represented. I think it's fair to say it was a representative sample of Afghan leadership.

Senator WICKER. What was their view about the importance of continued American participation and involvement in the stability of this region after this presidential election?

General DUNFORD. Senator, they unanimously endorsed the requirement for the BSA and a continued U.S. and coalition presence after 2015. I'd also most importantly point out that the loya jirga is representative of the sentiment of the Afghan people, where at the lowest 67 percent, at the highest 80 percent in the polling that we have done, support the BSA and a continued presence.

The one thing I'd also like to say, Senator, is that just 10 days ago I met with nine members of the Afghan parliament, basically the oversight committees of the ANSF. I asked them what message I should come back and deliver when I came back for testimony. They also, all of them overwhelmingly, said: "Don't let one individual speak for Afghanistan. The Afghan people appreciate what the American people have done and recognize that their future here in Afghanistan is inextricably linked to continued presence."

Senator WICKER. So it's not the view of the loya jirga and not the view of the polling that the United States has invaded this country or that the United States of America wants to occupy Afghanistan over the long haul? That's not their view, is it?

General DUNFORD. Senator, that's not at all the feeling of the Afghan people at this time, and we certainly have no intention of doing that.

Senator WICKER. I believe you mentioned in your testimony that this is a feeling of Afghan Government officials, civil leaders, and that there's a growing appreciation of the coalition's efforts; is that correct?

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator WICKER. I just wish—and I have to underscore—I wish this message were getting through. I have to underscore what our distinguished chairman has said on the second page of his testimony: "Unfortunately, the American people rarely read about the positive developments in Afghanistan. Instead, the media focus almost exclusively on negative incidents, depriving the American people of the sense of accomplishment they would receive if they were given a balanced view."

I appreciate your being here today, General, to give us a balanced view. I think it may be incumbent upon us on both sides of the dais, not as Republicans and Democrats, but as Americans, to say the troops that have sacrificed, the American taxpayers that sacrificed over more than a decade, has resulted in tangible positive accomplishments for the people in this region, and also that affect the American interests in a positive way.

I just hope we don't lose our resolve. I think we can decide as a body politic to lose this war nonetheless. We could do it if we try. But we are at the point of having a success, and if we don't send to the Afghan people a signal that we're abandoning them, that

we're once again going to look another way and get interested in something else, we don't send that signal, we can have an historic partnership that can leave us there with a very small footprint, with the United States still looking out for its national interest, but doing, as you so successfully have done, General, and your comrades, turning this fight over to the locals, but having us there as partners who are sending a signal that we're not going to forget about them once again.

Thank you for indulging me, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your profound statement which tells the truth to the American people about the success of our troops in this area. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Wicker. Personally, let me thank you for your steadfastness also along the way here.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Wicker, I can't imagine the press ever focusing on negative and controversy. [Laughter.]

General Dunford, thank you very much for being here this morning and for your service to the country.

One of the things that has impressed me on the trips that I have made to Afghanistan has been the close relationship between what happens in Afghanistan and what happens in Pakistan. I wonder if you could assess the kind of role that you think Pakistan can play post-2014, and also if you could speak to the efforts in Pakistan to engage in talks with the Taliban and how that might affect what's happening in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Senator, thanks for that question. I find it difficult to envision success in the region without cooperation of Pakistan and without an effective relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Over the past year I've been encouraged on a couple of fronts. One is, I believe, that Pakistan also recognizes the existential threat of extremism to their own security, and they also recognize that it's not in their best interests to have anything other than a stable, secure, and unified Afghanistan.

Since August, the Heads of State have met four times, which I think is very positive. That hadn't happened in quite some time. With Prime Minister Sharif has come new resolve to improve the relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The two areas that they have identified for cooperation are important to point out. One is to have a common definition of extremism and to cooperate on dealing with extremism. The other is to come up with a broader border management framework that would address the political issues, the economic issues, as well as the security issues between the two countries.

Our role is to work on developing a constructive military-to-military relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. I've met with the new Army Chief of Staff, General Raheel Sharif. He's indicated strong resolve to improve the relationship between the ANSF and the Pakistani army, as have his Afghan counterparts, and we'll spend a lot of time over the next several months doing that. One of the things we want to accomplish by the end of the year is to have a constructive bilateral relationship between Afghanistan and

Pakistan. Heretofore, over the last few years, it's actually been trilateral. We have played an important facilitating role. We hope over time to work ourselves out of that role, certainly maintain effective bilateral relationships with both countries, between the United States and Pakistan, and the United States and Afghanistan, but play less of a role in the important relationship between those two countries.

Senator SHAHEEN. Can you speak to efforts to engage in talks with the Taliban on the part of Pakistan?

General DUNFORD. Senator, we're watching that very carefully. To be honest, we don't have any insight into exactly the status of those discussions. What we have seen recently is continued violence by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Pakistani Taliban, if you will. We've also seen some limited military operations, particularly in the North Waziristan area, against the TTP. But what we know is what you know, and that is that Prime Minister Sharif and the leadership in Pakistan are committed to try to find some peaceful resolution. That's certainly in Pakistan and as well as in Afghanistan what needs ought happen in the long term. It's just not clear to me today if the conditions are set for constructive peace talks between the TTP and the Government of Pakistan, but it's clear that they're working to that end.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

We had a few minutes to chat before the hearing started and one of the things you commented on were the number of women who are volunteering and signed up to help with the elections in April. For the first time since the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund was established, money was explicitly authorized last year for recruitment and retention of women in the ANSF. Now, obviously, that's a separate issue from the elections, but I think it speaks to the empowerment of women in Afghanistan.

I wonder if you could talk about how that dedication of that fund to help assist with recruiting women and keeping them in the services in Afghanistan will work and whether we're seeing any of the benefits of that yet.

General DUNFORD. Senator, thanks for that question. It's clearly a very difficult issue. There's a strong cultural bias against women participating in the security forces, in the army or the police. There's a stated goal of 10 percent and we're at about 1 percent. There are some signs of progress. We just recently saw the first woman appointed as a police chief in Afghanistan and there's a second now that is in line to become a police chief. That's a positive sign. There are some general officers both in the Ministry of Interior Affairs and in the Ministry of Defense, so there are some role models coming up.

In the case of these 13,000, it's interesting. There's 13,000 female searchers who have been identified. That in itself was difficult again because of the cultural bias. But in a conversation with the Ministry of Interior Affairs which I think you'll find encouraging, Minister Daudzai, he plans to use these 13,000 as a pool from which to recruit policewomen. So as he gets women that identify themselves as willing to step up and do something as important as be a searcher at the elections and facilitate the transition that's going to occur subsequent to 5 April, he also recognizes that that's

an eligible pool of women who would probably make good police-women and he plans to use that.

He has a stated goal of increasing the numbers of policewomen in Afghanistan by 5,000 in the next 24 months and then 10,000 by 2017. My sense is he's very committed to that. My sense also is that the cultural challenges that exist are very real and it's going to take some time before that happens.

But certainly if you would look at the plight of women today and the prospects for their participation and success in the security ministries, it's certainly much higher than even 2 or 3 years ago.

Senator SHAHEEN. My time is up, but if I could just make a follow-on comment. That is, to the extent that we can encourage that sentiment to continue as we look at the new administration taking over in Afghanistan, certainly that's something that all of us here support.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, General Dunford, for your steadfast leadership in such an important time. I know all of us admire your leadership and your service to our country. I want to thank you for the sacrifice that your family's been making during your service in Afghanistan as well.

I want to ask you, General, if we were to withdraw from Afghanistan this year, what happens to the women in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I think the plight of women would be pretty dire if we were to withdraw at the end of 2014. I think the support we're providing in security, the support we're providing for political transition, actually creates the climate within which women and other members of society can actually flourish and achieve their own goals and objectives.

I would say again the prospects are not very good if we were to withdraw at the end of 2014 for women.

Senator AYOTTE. I don't think any of us will ever forget the images in the soccer stadiums with the Taliban and what they did to women. As we look toward the importance of our commitment in Afghanistan, let us not forget what you just said, that if we leave and we abandon the work that we have done in Afghanistan, that we could send women back in those soccer stadiums, and I don't think that's acceptable to any of us. Would you agree, General?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I would. I think it's probably important for me to share with you that I didn't provide you a minute ago with my own assessment in isolation. That's the feedback that I received from the Afghan women that I've spoken to. So I'm actually voicing on their behalf their concerns about 2015 and beyond were we not to maintain a presence.

Senator AYOTTE. If we don't maintain a presence, what happens with al Qaeda? Also I would ask you, how quickly would this happen? We talk about—when I hear, for example, why does it matter in terms of people at home if we were to withdraw this year, what happens with al Qaeda and how quickly does this all unravel? I think this is important for people to understand, that we've made great success, but if we suddenly pull back what happens and how quickly?

General DUNFORD. Senator, thanks. First of all, I think the deterioration of the Afghan Forces begins to happen fairly quickly in 2015. That's because, again, where we are today in the campaign is we've focused on quality of the force, building battalions, building brigades, building corps. What's now our focus is building the systems and the processes that allow those tactical units to sustain themselves.

So things that would happen almost immediately after we would leave in 2015 is units would run out of fuel, pay systems would not be completely operable, spare parts would not be available for vehicles. So we'd start to see decreased readiness in the ANSF and obviously their operational reach would be less.

We also would not be able to complete our work with the Afghan Air Force, which really is 2 or 3 years away. We're still in the process of actually fielding the Afghan Air Force.

With regard to al Qaeda, again my assessment is that the pressure that we put on al Qaeda virtually every day in operations by our SOF in cooperation with their Afghan partners is what has kept the al Qaeda from reconstituting. We know from intelligence that they have every intent of continuing to operate from Afghanistan and Pakistan. They would view it as a great victory were we to withdraw and were they to then have the space within which to conduct operations against the West once again. Again, I think it would not only be a physical reconstitution, but a huge moral factor for al Qaeda as a movement were we to withdraw from the region in 2015 and allow them to once again establish preeminence in the region and become the vanguard for the al Qaeda movement from the region.

Senator AYOTTE. So the vanguard for the al Qaeda movement and a risk to the United States of America again, correct, General?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I don't think there's any question that eventually there'd be a risk to western interests, including the United States.

Senator AYOTTE. So there's no doubt it's so important that we get this right. One of the things that I've been encouraged by is that all the presidential candidates support a BSA. Karzai's gone, right? With all due respect, he's made a lot of troubling comments that I think all of us disagree with. But he's gone. He's gone because there's going to be a new election, and all of the candidates that are running have committed to signing the BSA, if elected, correct?

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator AYOTTE. I know that you said as long as the runoff goes in August, the United States would have adequate time for planning going into 2015. How important is it that we announce our follow-on commitment, that the President do that, with regard to the timing of the runoff in August? So what's the timing there and how important is that timing in terms of us making a commitment on behalf of our country as to what our follow-on force will be?

General DUNFORD. Senator, again, there's several issues. If you don't mind I'd like to just touch on all of them very briefly. To me, the delay in the BSA, part of it is the military campaign, and I mentioned that it begins to be high risk if we don't make a decision by September; we have a high risk against an orderly withdrawal. That's simply because of how long it takes to get all the equipment

out, all the people out, and to transfer all the facilities. We start to run into a situation where there are as many tasks to do as there are days to do those before December 31. So that's why I characterize that as high risk subsequent to September.

I think the real challenge with the delay in the BSA and the delay in certainly post-2015 actually starts in Kabul with the leadership, the Afghan people, and the ANSF across the country. I think it is also fair to say that currently the uncertainty about 2015 affects the behavior of regional actors, to include Pakistan. Those nations are hedging, not certain what will be, what the facts on the ground will be in 2015.

Then the other issue that I'm concerned about in terms of how long this uncertainty would last would be the willingness and the ability of the coalition to maintain cohesion and actually participate. I think it's very important to point out that the contribution of the coalition has been significant, and I assess that in a future mission it would be very important for us to do a future mission also as a coalition.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, General. I know that my time is up, but I would just say this. We know that Karzai is going, that the newly-elected president, whoever comes out of this, is willing and is committed to signing the BSA. I would hope that our President would make an announcement to give certainty to the situation in Afghanistan as to what our follow-on commitment will be and to make that announcement to ensure that the Afghan people know that we are committed to following through here and that we are going to ensure that Afghanistan does not, for example, become a safe haven for al Qaeda, all the things that you just talked about. So I hope that Mr. President will come forward and really give that certainty.

I understand and respect that that is contingent on the BSA being signed and protection for our troops. But I believe the President could make that contingent upon that signing.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Kaine.

Senator KAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dunford, it is good to see you again. I enjoyed our visit in July and I appreciate your service. I echo the comments that Senator McCain made.

I also want to underline points made by the chairman in his opening statement. The American role in improving the life of Afghans has truly been massive, and the more we do that the more we inoculate against extremism. The mission is about training the ANSF, but it is also about making Afghans understand that they don't have to go back to what they had.

Just one bit of evidence that I just find staggering: Since the Taliban fell in Afghanistan, life expectancy in Afghanistan has improved from 45 years to 62 years. Now, in a country of 30 million people, if you can improve life expectancy by 17 years in about a decade that's an additional 500 million years of life for the current Afghan population that has been a result of the work that the United States and other nations have done. It has largely been

done by public health investments that have reduced child mortality.

You tell me that the polling suggests that Afghans like the United States. If you can reduce the risk of my children dying young and increase life expectancy in my country by 17 years, I'm going to like the United States too. I'm going to like the partnership. I'm not surprised at all that the polling results are so strong.

I think we do have to explain. Maybe our citizens are not thinking that the investment that we should be making should be about the improvement of life expectancy in Afghanistan, but this is inoculation against extremism. This is the kind of real life tangible evidence that Afghans can see that will help them not fall backward into the Taliban, al Qaeda, or other extremists.

So I want to associate myself with the comments made earlier that the comprehensive nature of the investment by the United States and its partners in Afghanistan has made a significant difference and that bodes well going forward.

I met in Bahrain in December with the Foreign Minister of Iraq, Foreign Minister Zebari, and he is now very public about this: "I wish in Iraq we had worked out an acceptable BSA with the United States and the United States had stayed." He says this publicly. He says: "We made a mistake by not being willing to work out a BSA with the United States and we now regret it." He has even indicated that he has said that directly to Hamid Karzai: "Do not make the mistake that we made in Iraq, because what's happening in Iraq now is tragic, could have been avoided."

But for all the good that we can do, we shouldn't stay unwanted. We shouldn't stay if we can't work out a BSA. We're not interested in being occupiers. We're interested in being partners. I'm happy to hear your testimony, General, that the Afghan people want us to be partners.

A couple of questions about the election. These are very important. It's hard to fathom. Here it's March 12 today, and these elections are going to happen in the next 3½ weeks. You have indicated that all the presidential candidates support a BSA with the United States. I know I'm saying this for the record. I know the answer to this. This isn't like private support, where they've said to us: "Hey, we'll sign a BSA." They're taking this position publicly in the midst of an election campaign and telling their voters, their electorate, when asked: "We want the United States to stay and we want to work out an acceptable BSA." Isn't that correct?

General DUNFORD. Senator, that's correct. This is the very first time they've had a very public campaign process, to include televised debates. So these comments have been made in the context of televised debates and public appearances, which included media engagement. So it's absolutely their public position. Clearly they wouldn't be saying that if it didn't reflect the electorate.

Senator Kaine. Right. I'm sure they're as responsive to the electorate as we are. They can read polls just like we can. But this issue of U.S. presence is not a minor little issue in the presidential campaign. There are other issues certainly, but I imagine, and from the press I've read, it suggests that the continuing U.S. presence and the working out of this deal is a major piece of the public dialogue and debate in the run-up to these presidential elections.

Therefore, the result of the elections will be a mandate from the Afghan public in terms of their desire about this continuing relationship, correct?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator. I believe that whoever the next President of Afghanistan will be, he will come into office with a mandate to enter into a partnership with the United States and the coalition.

Senator KAYNE. Now, I know that that creates some real anxiety in the Taliban, and they have just recently done very public calls for violence to disrupt the elections. Those elections were disrupted to some degree on election day with violence a number of years ago. But, General Dunford, you indicate your belief that the increased size of security forces, the ANSF, should be sufficient to protect against significant violence marring these elections. That is your thought today?

General DUNFORD. Senator, it is. It's based on my assessment not only of the Afghan performance day-to-day, but again the major events that have occurred in Afghanistan over the last year where the enemy has had a demonstrated intent to disrupt those events. Again, the Islamic festival that I mentioned, the loya jirga itself in Kabul, where they locked down the entire city, really demonstrated to me the ability of the ANSF to create a climate within which inclusive elections could take place.

I would not say that it'll be violence-free. There will certainly be high-profile attacks and the enemy will have a concerted effort to disrupt the elections. But at the end of the day, I'm confident that they will be unsuccessful in their efforts to disrupt the elections.

Senator KAYNE. That is good to hear, General. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to add my compliments to the chairman for his opening statement. I just can't believe you're leaving the Senate in mid-life like you are. Very disappointing.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Thanks for the "mid-life" comment. [Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. From the South Carolina point of view, you're just getting started. [Laughter.]

Thank you for coming, General. I remember when all these rows in the room were full, with people carrying bags and everybody was hanging on every word about Afghanistan. I'm just here to say that the decision we're about to make as a Nation regarding Afghanistan is probably the single most important decision we'll make in the 21st century in securing our Homeland other than the Iranian nuclear program. I can't think of a more important decision for America to make than how we transition in Afghanistan. There may not be a lot of interest in the room, but to the members of the committee, thank you; you've acquitted yourselves well.

No BSA, no troops, right?

General DUNFORD. That is correct, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So to the Afghan people: If we don't have a BSA, not one troop with my support will be left behind. We're not going to put our young men and women in that situation.

The good news is most Afghans want us to stay, right?

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Maybe what you're telling us, if we're smart and we end this well, we can construct a scenario where the Afghans will help defend America.

General DUNFORD. Senator, if you look back at the nations that we helped in the 1990s, many of them are actually on the ground with us in Afghanistan today. I'd point out Georgia as one of the examples.

Senator GRAHAM. But what's in it for us is a fair proposition for us to be exploring. What's in it for us to me would be an Afghanistan willing to fight the terrorists and help defend our Nation from attack. Do you agree with that?

General DUNFORD. I agree, a partnership with Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism is absolutely where we're trying to go.

Senator GRAHAM. You want to help women in America make sure al Qaeda can't kill a bunch of us here in the Homeland, right?

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. It's just not about Afghan women; it's about American women, about American men. So we have an historic opportunity to turn a country that's been isolated in history into an ally and can be a front-line defense against al Qaeda. Do you agree with that?

General DUNFORD. I agree with that, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So the goal is to keep the enemy away from the Homeland and to build partnerships. Isn't that the general goal in how to win the war on terrorism?

General DUNFORD. It is, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree that Afghanistan is the central front in that battle, because this is where it all started?

General DUNFORD. I do, and particularly in South Asia, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So if you believe this is the place it all started and we can leave behind a scenario where it ends well, the question is the cost-benefit analysis. Before September 11, on September 10, 2001, how many troops did we have in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. We didn't have any troops on the ground.

Senator GRAHAM. How many ambassadors did we have in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. We did not have an ambassador.

Senator GRAHAM. How much money did we give to Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. We didn't give any, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So we've tried that and it didn't work.

How much has September 11 cost us in terms of dollars?

General DUNFORD. Billions of dollars, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. A lot more than the presence in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. That's fair to say, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So if you looked at the cost to the country in terms of financial costs, going to the model of "leave them alone, they'll leave us alone," did not work. To our folks in West Virginia: It cost us a lot more to ignore Afghanistan than it has to be involved.

Now, the 6,000 lives plus lost in Afghanistan and Iraq are heart-breaking, but these were soldiers that signed up and were willing to defend the Nation. 3,000 civilians died in the blink of an eye on the Homeland.

Do you believe that if we ignore the threats coming from that part of the world that the next attack on the United States could be greater than it was on September 11?

General DUNFORD. I absolutely believe there will be another attack. Whether it will be greater or not, I don't know, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with me the capabilities that are beginning to be available to terrorist organizations are greater than they were before September 11?

General DUNFORD. Yes, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. So Karzai is an outlier, let's just leave it at that, right? He happens to be the president, but he doesn't represent Afghanistan's view of what to do regarding the U.S.-Afghan relationship; is that a fair statement?

General DUNFORD. It is, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. The Afghans don't see us as the Russians or the British occupiers because they could kill us all tomorrow if they wanted to, couldn't they? How many people are in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. 25 to 30 million.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. How many are there of us?

General DUNFORD. Right now there are 33,000 Americans.

Senator GRAHAM. How long could 33,000 survive if 25 or 30 million saw us as an occupier?

General DUNFORD. It would be a difficult circumstance to find yourself in, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes. I wouldn't want to be there.

So the point is, you have green on blue. That happens in every war. But I'm here to tell you, if they didn't want us, we wouldn't be there. It offends me when people suggest that we're the British Empire of a long time ago or the Russians. We're not, not in the eyes of the Afghans.

So you have two choices. One choice is to go back to the pre-September 11 nobody there, no money there. The cost of staying: How much would it cost the American taxpayers to maintain a 350,000-plus Afghan army? How much would it cost to maintain 10,000 to 12,000 troops? Compare the benefit we would achieve from that investment versus leaving, nobody left behind, and see where the smart play is at. Can you run us through that quickly?

General DUNFORD. Senator, the cost of ANSF at about 352,000 in 2015 would be \$5 billion. Our coalition partners have committed to pay \$1.3 billion of that. Afghanistan will pay approximately \$500 million of that. So the cost to the United States would be somewhere on the order of \$3 billion.

We're still working the cost figures for our actual presence overall right now, but certainly far less than the cost that you just outlined.

Senator GRAHAM. So you put that in one bucket. The other bucket is the cost if we leave, and you're telling us the cost of leaving is far greater than staying under the configuration you've just indicated; is that correct?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. A final thought. Is it fair to say that our national security interests are not going to be judged in history by the day we left Afghanistan, but by what we left behind?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I think it's how we leave, absolutely, not when we leave.

Senator GRAHAM. It's how we leave and what we leave behind. You're here to tell us as the commander of our forces in Afghanistan, if we're smart and we do this right, conditions-based withdrawal, we can leave behind a stable country that can help defend the American Homeland, or, we can leave behind a disaster that will haunt us for decades?

General DUNFORD. I believe that, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Graham.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you.

Thank you, General, for being here today. I want to talk a little bit—I know I sound sometimes like a one-note chorus here—about the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), reconstruction efforts, and accountability for that money. What I'm really concerned about in the coming months is that the SIGAR, Mr. John F. Sopko, has indicated to you that no more than 21 percent of Afghanistan will be accessible to civilian oversight going forward.

Now, that's a 47 percent reduction since 2009. So we had eyes and ears on the majority of Afghanistan during a time period that hundreds and hundreds, and, in fact, billions of dollars of American taxpayers' money was being spent to build things. We're only going to have eyes and ears in 21 percent of the country right now. Do you agree with that assessment, that our ability to oversee any kind of ongoing work is going to be severely curtailed and limited under the current scenario?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I may be able to make you feel a little bit better about that. I'll speak from the DOD perspective. We'll have 32 projects ongoing in 2015. All but five of those projects will fall in areas where we will be able to provide proper oversight. Five projects will fall outside of that range, and what we're working with the Department of State (DOS) now is to ensure that we have Afghans that can help us provide oversight and ensure that we provide the kind of stewardship that I know you're addressing.

Senator MCCASKILL. I haven't seen, none of us have seen, the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding. Of those 31 projects that you're going to be working on in 2015, is there going to be any more money requested for any of that work in this coming OCO budget?

General DUNFORD. Senator, it will be in 2015. Some of that is 2015 money. So, yes, part of those projects would be there. The projects in total are somewhere between \$600 and \$700 million. These are the last 32 projects that were part of the original program of record for Afghan Forces. So when I talk about projects, they're virtually all either Afghan National Police or Afghan National Army projects that are again the back side of the program of record that was outlined a couple of years ago.

Senator McCASKILL. So there have been no new projects started this calendar year?

General DUNFORD. Senator, there are no projects now that we're starting that aren't part of the program of record, that's absolutely true. No new starts.

Senator McCASKILL. Okay. Before I move on to another area, quickly, I think it's really important that we get a clear-eyed assessment of how well this works. There has just been an assumption from day one, and I have great respect for General Petraeus's guide for counterinsurgency effort, but I'm not aware that there has ever been any data or analysis that has really said that the military getting involved in large-scale infrastructure projects works in terms of the counterinsurgency.

It may have helped along the margins in Iraq, but most of that money was wasted, because most of those projects are not operating now. The health care centers never opened. The water park is in crumbles. A lot of the grid was blown up during the process. This notion of building major infrastructure during a conflict and the security challenges we have—and we know some of our money went to the bad guys for guarding that one highway we were building, and the whole blurring of the lines between DOS and DOD as to whose job this is and when and how—I really think we need to do a clear-eyed assessment, now that we have both Iraq and Afghanistan to look at.

If you read the Special Inspector General for Iraq final report, there's some real work to do here, I think, on the part of the military. I want to know, is there some discussion about that, that there will be a reevaluation of the effectiveness of this strategy?

General DUNFORD. Senator, there is, and I did hear General Dempsey's comments the other day and I'd associate myself with those. I think at the end of a decade of war it's fair to say that it's very important that we go back and take a look at the lessons learned and make sure we document those now while they're fresh.

Senator McCASKILL. We have some problems with property accountability in Afghanistan. We know that we have 26 open investigations for missing property that include weapons and weapons systems with a total of almost \$590 million, that the Inspector General (IG) has found all these problems over there in the two places where we're trying to retrofit and account for all the equipment. Do you feel like you've gotten a handle on that?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I do. We have spent the last year, and frankly even before I arrived, trying to ensure that. Again, this is part of lessons learned from even the Iraq experience. As we conducted a retrograde and redeployment in Iraq, I think we learned a lot of lessons, and I believe we're applying those lessons learned now in Afghanistan as we get accountability in the retrograde and redeployment process.

Senator McCASKILL. I'll have some specific questions for the record about what has changed since the IG took a look. It's a little worrisome to me since I've been at the yards that did the same thing in Iraq and I thought we had really turned the corner on that. I'm disappointed that the IG would find these kinds of problems after what we did learn in Iraq. So I'll follow up on that.

Finally, I just want to mention detainees. I understand the Afghan Government released individuals with ties to attacks to coalition forces. Does the BSA enable our forces to continue to detain and remove dangerous individuals from the battlefield should the United States keep an enduring presence in Afghanistan? It's very troubling to me they released those people, and I think it's something that we should all be very worried about. I want you to tell me you are comfortable that if you catch people that are trying to kill our men and women in battle that we can keep them captured and that the Afghanistan Government does not have the ability to let them go.

General DUNFORD. Senator, first, I share your concern with that. Clearly, protecting the force is my responsibility and I take that very seriously. I was greatly concerned with the release of those 65 individuals. I would say that the viability of our presence post-2014 is going to be determined by a number of factors, one of which will be an effective regime to address detainees, not only to ensure that those individuals that are a threat to the force and to the Afghan people are kept off the battlefield, but also that we would have access to the intelligence associated with those individuals in order to again protect the force and conduct effective counterterrorism operations.

So within the new administration, I think that's something that has to be arranged and it has to be very much a part of the BSA and the other arrangements that we have with the next government.

Senator McCASKILL. But we don't have it now?

General DUNFORD. We have an arrangement, Senator, but the Government of Afghanistan did not observe that agreement.

Senator McCASKILL [presiding]. Very disappointing. Thank you.

Senator Levin had to leave and I am going to now defer to Senator Donnelly.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

General, first I want to thank you for everything you've done there. It's been an extraordinary tour of duty. You've done amazing work. As I mentioned to you once before, I have family members who have a history with St. Michael's and everybody there is extremely proud of you and everything you've done.

I want to mention in regards to the MRAP vehicles. I served in the House for a little bit too, and when we were coming and creating MRAP vehicles and trying to get those in the field as fast as we could, we weren't worried about whether or not we were going to be able to get them home or what ship they were going to come home on or whether all the dirt was going to be cleaned out from under the tires. We were worried about saving lives. That was the whole purpose of the MRAP vehicles.

I think if you had talked to anybody in the House or in the Senate at that time, if you had said, "Look, we can get these, but do you want to worry about how they come home?"—we obviously want to get them all taken care of, but that in a list of about 100 things was about 101—I think number one was telling families in Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, and New York that their sons or daughters would be in the safest vehicles possible and that they could come home safely.

So I just want to tell you that my opinion is get them back if you can, but the most important job they have had to do they've been doing.

I want to ask you about improvised explosive devices (IED) a little bit, General, and the progress we're making in that area. I know there's been testing on fertilizers as well. We're trying to come up with a formula that is non-explosive. I wanted to hear how things are going in regards to fertilizer-based IEDs and what are the biggest IED challenges you have right now and how we're doing overall in that area.

General DUNFORD. Senator, thanks for that question. We've worked very closely with Pakistan. Particularly the Joint IED Defeat Office (JIEDDO) has done a lot of great work over the past year. Because of that existential threat to Pakistan that I mentioned earlier, the Pakistanis are very focused on the IED challenge, as are the Afghans. So we've had a number of sessions with them and there is cooperation with the producers of—

Senator DONNELLY. I think you know one of the real bright things that we see is the cooperation on this and that we're actually going to do testing here in the States as well.

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator. The efforts that certainly the committee and again JIEDDO have done have actually paid dividends.

The greatest IED challenge today, of course, is to Afghan Forces. They have increasingly borne the brunt of that, including Afghan civilians. In our focus, I feel comfortable with the equipment that we have, the training we have for our forces. Our focus on IED's now is equally to make sure that the ANSF are capable of dealing with that challenge, and a lot of the equipment that we bought over the last 2 or 3 years now is finally arriving, finally being integrated, and their capabilities are improving.

But I think the real bright spot and the potential for improvement here in the coming months is that cooperation between the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Afghanistan, and the tripartite arrangement that we have to work on this particular issue.

Senator DONNELLY. How are we doing in terms of catching the threat before it happens, being able to protect our vehicles on the roads? We are way up from where we were, aren't we?

General DUNFORD. We've made significant improvement, Senator. But this is one of those force protection issues that I'd never appear before the committee and tell you that I'm comfortable with where we are.

Senator DONNELLY. Oh, no, not until they're all gone.

What is the material of choice now that the terrorists are using?

General DUNFORD. We still see ammonium nitrate. Probably 60, 80 percent of the IEDs contain some type of homemade explosives.

Senator DONNELLY. Thanks for your effort on that. That obviously has torn families and units apart. Like you said, we will not be satisfied until there are no more. We appreciate everything you've done.

In areas like Kunar, Nuristan, and in other parts, what happens even if our forces remain behind, which obviously we hope we get a BSA? But what do those areas look like post-2014?

General DUNFORD. There is still safe haven for al Qaeda in that region and, frankly, a complex arrangement of extremist organizations—al Qaeda, TTP, Afghan Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The list goes on of individuals that use that area. We have largely, again, kept them from planning and conducting attacks from that area, and they largely are focused on survival.

They expect that we will leave at the end of 2014 and they expect that after we leave they'll have the opportunity to once again expand their safe haven in the region. My expectation is that, again, as we grow a partnership with the ANSF and we grow their counterterrorism capability, that a combination of our train, advise, assist, and counterterrorism capability, combined with the ever-increasing counterterrorism capability of the Afghans, will ensure that those individuals again focus more on their own survival than they do on attacks against either the Afghan people or against us.

Senator DONNELLY. After December 2014, for U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and provincial reconstruction teams (PRT), will they have the ability to still be able to go out and put forward efforts, put forward projects and programs and be in a situation where they will feel safe or secure?

General DUNFORD. Senator, there won't be any PRTs in 2015. USAID right now is with the embassy as a whole and we're certainly participating in discussions on this. I think largely their project oversight will be conducted by Afghans, except where it happens to fall in, within what we call our operational reach. In other words, where our forces are and there's a casualty evacuation capability and a quick reaction force capability, we'll certainly be able to support USAID and other DOS employees. But in those areas where we don't have that kind of coverage, my expectation is that we will not have DOS employees and USAID.

Senator DONNELLY. It would not seem that without that they could be in an environment where they're going to be safe at all?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator DONNELLY. I just want to thank you again. You've done an extraordinary job under very difficult circumstances and the Nation owes a huge debt of gratitude to you.

General DUNFORD. Thank you, Senator.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you.

Senator INHOFE. Madam Chairman.

Senator McCASKILL. Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you very much.

I have seen some disturbing things, General, that I am concerned about, having to do with the inspector, SIGAR. At the end of January, your staff was accused of preempting and undermining audit reports of SIGAR after a series of audits.

Now, let me ask you maybe three questions here. How do the SIGAR personnel get to audit locations, such as construction sites in southern Afghanistan, and how do they get access to the data that they need for the military organizations and the Afghan ministries?

General DUNFORD. Senator, we provide that support.

Senator INHOFE. One of the statements that I recall was SIGAR has said—and this is a quote—"No more than 21 percent of Afghanistan will be accessible to U.S. civilian oversight personnel by

the end of 2014." Do you think that's true and how important is that to their mission and to yours? I don't think it's true. What do you think?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I think it's important. What the SIGAR really is referring to there, I assume, is that 21 percent of the country will be covered by U.S. Forces footprint or coalition forces footprint. That's true because we're reducing the force so much. But I also think that percentage is actually irrelevant, because what's most important is what's the coverage of those areas where there are actually projects ongoing.

There's only going to be 32 projects from a DOD perspective in 2015, and all but five of those projects will actually fall within our ability to provide proper oversight with U.S. Forces.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, then it's not correct.

General DUNFORD. That's right, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. All right. I read a lot of these things and it appears to me—and I don't know that this is true—that they go in there, they find out things, they go to the newspapers. You see a lot of headlines in very high-profile media outlets. As the commander charged with making the military campaign in Afghanistan successful, what do you consider the most important role as it's supposed to be of SIGAR, and have they been focused on that role?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I welcome SIGAR and any other organization. In fact, during my time at U.S. Forces Afghanistan I've requested inspectors to come over to look at projects. I think, first of all, we take stewardship very seriously. I realize I have a responsibility to American taxpayers to make sure that every dollar that's spent in Afghanistan results in capability development and advancement of our interests. So we take that seriously.

What I'm most interested in is the investigator's ability to tell me how I can save U.S. Government money, what decisions I'm making in the future, as opposed to what might have happened in terms of lessons learned. I'm not dismissing lessons learned. Those will be important to some future conflict. But for me today as a commander, I'm much more interested in the decisions I'm making today and the decisions I'll make tomorrow to make sure those are good decisions and make sure they reflect good stewardship. That's where I think the investigators can help me the most.

Senator INHOFE. Some of the headlines I'm referring to, I'm sure you're aware of them. Do you think they're all accurate?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I think that in many cases they're sensationalized.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, I think they are, too. Does that make your job easier?

General DUNFORD. Senator, it makes it more difficult. We're in the 21st century, the information age, and I think the narrative is very important. If there's a narrative of pessimism, if there's a narrative of abuse, if there's a narrative that we're not good stewards, I think that affects our mission.

Senator INHOFE. I appreciate it and I agree.

Let me say one thing. I identify with the remarks that Senator Graham made about the chairman. In fact, I tried to say that in

my opening statement, but not nearly as eloquently as Senator Graham did.

Thanks for your great work.

Senator Graham is recognized.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. Thank you, sir.

Detainees. I really appreciate the stand you took against the 65 detainees being released by President Karzai. We have a resolution in Congress condemning that action. Do you believe it would be helpful for Congress to send a signal that we object to what President Karzai did?

General DUNFORD. I do, Senator, and I'd like to thank you for what you've been doing over the last several weeks to ensure we sent a very clear message to the Afghan Government.

Senator GRAHAM. Let the Afghans know that economic aid will be cut off if they continue this.

Could you send the committee a report on the status of detainees—give our guys in the Combined Joint Interagency Task Force (CJIATF) 435 something to do. I'm sure they're bored out there. I wanted to just shout out to the CJIATF 435. Thank you for all the hard work out there. A report on the status of detainees, third country nationals. Give the committee some indication of the problems we face between now and July with detainees, so we can make informed decisions to help you. Could you do that?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator.

[The information referred to follows:]

INTRODUCTION

Combined Joint Interagency Task Force (CJIATF) 435 has developed a strong collaborative relationship with our highly capable partners in the Afghan National Army Military Police Guard Command (MPGC), the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the Attorney General's Office, and members of the court at the Justice Center in Parwan (JCIP). As an integrated justice center, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) entities demonstrates the ability to conduct pre-trial confinement, law enforcement investigation, criminal prosecution and post-trial incarceration in accordance with Afghan law and to international standards. Though the MPGC still experience challenges in sustainment and some administrative processes, the institutional culture and tactical performance is strong and enduring. Additionally, the JCIP, a secure and reputable court co-located with the Parwan detention facility, will soon exhaust its case load of former U.S. captures, but has begun processing Afghan detainees captured through primarily partnered operations. Continuing logistics and mentoring support is essential to mature this important counter-terror court.

Unfortunately, the effectiveness of this partnership has been hampered since July 2013 by the troubling behavior of a small number of Afghan political leaders empowered by the GIRoA presidential administration. This behavior has resulted in the release of high risk detainees, restrictions to investigative processes, initiation of facility transition plans that could precipitate the closure of the Afghan National Detention Facility-Parwan (ANDF-P), and the attempted barring of new intakes of Afghan detainees subject to Afghan rule of law at the ANDF-P. Most recently, a President-ordered commission investigating foreign-operated detention facilities also needlessly complicated relations between GIRoA and its allies. These actions call into question the commitment of certain Afghan leaders to our enduring partnership, and are detrimental to the security of Afghanistan, the United States, and coalition forces.

This period of the campaign can be characterized by our attempts to preserve reconciliation space with the future Afghan administration, to maximize the opportunity to establish an enduring National Security Justice Center at Parwan. Despite the aforementioned political friction, the Afghans have made steady progress in managing detainees since the transfer of detention operations to their authority, to include the intake, investigation, and prosecution of detainees. CJIATF 435 provides continued assistance to GIRoA for facility operations, security, sustainment plan-

ning, and full-spectrum prosecution and judicial support in order to maintain acceptable standards of secure and humane treatment of detainees and prevent extra judicial killings or gross violations of human rights.

CJIATF 435 currently conducts Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) detention of approximately 50 Third Country National (TCN) detainees at the U.S.-controlled portion of the ANDF-P. We should determine and act on the final disposition of all TCN detainees by 31 July 2014 in order to meet retrograde timelines and complete disposition instructions prior to the expiration of detention authorities on 31 December 2014.

The response that follows addresses current challenges associated with the Afghan Review Board's (ARB) extra-judicial releases of dangerous detainees, the announced transfer of the ANDF-P from Ministry of Defense to Ministry of Interior control, the advantages and requirements associated with preserving the JCIP to act as a Central National Security Court, and the need to rapidly determine the disposition of TCN detainees.

AFGHAN REVIEW BOARD EXTRA-JUDICIAL RELEASE OF DANGEROUS DETAINEES

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 25 March 2013 between the United States and GIRoA established the ARB, a committee designed to transfer detainees from LOAC detention authority to the Afghan constitutional authority, and formalized GIRoA's commitment to continued internment of those detainees designated as Enduring Security Threats (EST). ESTs are defined as detainees assessed to have both the capability and commitment to pose a severe and enduring threat to the security of Afghanistan and coalition members, whether inside or outside of Afghanistan. GIRoA Presidential Decree #5 appointed the three ARB members (one of which did not participate). In total, between June 2013 and February 2014, the United States transferred 890 detainee files to the ARB, but to date the panel has used its discretion to order the release of 678 detainees without referral to prosecution and judicial review.

Many of these release decisions were made despite strong incriminating evidence against the detainees, showing the earliest indicators of the political, rather than security-focused nature of the panel. CJIATF 435 disputed 93 release decisions and conducted several key leader engagements with the ARB leadership and other justice sector leaders. When it became evident that the ARB would only change their decisions in 5 of the 93 disputed releases, CJIATF 435 recommended that the Commander of International Security Assistance Force (COMISAF) exercise the final option provided in the 25 March 2013 MoU, a bilateral exchange of information and views with the Minister of Defense. After COMISAF's engagement with the Minister of Defense, GIRoA forwarded all 88 remaining disputed files to the Attorney General for a senior level review, resulting in 65 releases and 23 referrals to prosecution in February 2014. We believe some of these released individuals have returned to the fight. With no legal consequences, future released detainees will continue to fill the ranks of the insurgency.

These disputed releases and the clear political influence under which the ARB operated fundamentally altered our relationship with a small number of Afghan National Army leaders. It did not, however, damage our strong and growing partnership with most of our Afghan MPGC and Justice sector partners.

On 23 February 2014, the President of Afghanistan issued a decree nullifying existing agreements with the United States regarding detainees. While the decree announced that the ARB would conclude after reviewing 58 remaining files, it did not address the Afghan commitment to continued internment of ESTs. Of the 58 remaining files, 41 are ESTs. CJIATF 435 will dispute the release of any EST, but holds little leverage or influence over the ARB and the current administration if they remain committed to using detainee disposition as a political tool. Based on the current political state, and passage of time since the 65 releases, we believe GIRoA could initiate release of a significant portion of the remaining 58 ARB detainees.

TRANSFER OF ANDF-P FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE TO THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

The 23 February 2014 President of Afghanistan Decree also announced the transfer of the "Ministry of Defense (MoD) detention facility at Bagram," the ANDF-P, to the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The presidential announcement appears to have caused hedging behavior by both MoD and MoI, as MoD sought to keep the MPGC within MoD, and only transfer the facilities (i.e., ANDF-P and the ANDF at Pol-e Charkhi), and MoI has sought to take the facilities, personnel and resources. This impasse between ministries could potentially result in an inactive facility, jeopard-

izing both our ability to transfer captures resulting from partnered or counter-terrorism-related operations, and GIRoA's use of the JCIP.

Despite the continuing uncertainty regarding the timing of the transfer, CJIATF 435 is poised to partner with either Ministry to facilitate the eventual transition, and ensure the continued confidence in the ability of the Afghans to detain the most dangerous security threats to GIRoA and coalition forces, while ensuring humane care, custody and control of all detainees in accordance with International Laws. No matter which Ministry conducts the pre-trial confinement and post-trial incarceration, NDS stands ready to conduct investigations and the Attorney General's Office to conduct prosecution at the JCIP.

APRIL 2014 DETENTION FACILITIES INVESTIGATION

On 19 April 2014, the GIRoA President ordered a probe regarding the alleged presence of prisons run by foreign soldiers at the Kandahar International Airport. The high-level commission included the two members of the ARB, and was led by the Commander of the MoD Detention Operations Command. A week later, the commission claimed to the media to have uncovered secret prisons on two coalition bases. In truth, every facility that the United States uses for detention is well known not only by GIRoA, but also by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

We believe the Presidential order and the commission's findings are aimed at creating a public perception that the United States and United Kingdom operate illegal and secret detention facilities, consistent with the long running theme of Afghan sovereignty.

PRESERVING PROGRESS AT THE JUSTICE CENTER IN PARWAN

Separately, but integral to the Rule of Law, the Afghans continue to make considerable progress at the JCIP. The JCIP, an Afghan court with Afghan judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, and investigators has tried more than 6,500 cases with a 74 percent conviction rate as of April 2014. The JCIP operates inside a secure facility free from the security concerns of many provincial courts. CJIATF 435 and Department of State (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) continue to provide prosecutor mentorship and document lessons learned to encourage and support the use of evidence-based operations and prosecutions throughout Afghanistan.

CJIATF 435 leadership strongly recommends that the strength and synergy of the MPG/C confinement capabilities, NDS investigative capabilities, and prosecutorial & adjudicatory capabilities of the JCIP must be preserved in order to serve as an enduring National Security Justice Center. Many senior Afghan MoD, NDS, Attorney General's Office (AGO), and judicial officials have expressed a significant desire to continue the operation of both the JCIP and ANDF-P beyond the ISAF mission, ensuring the proper pre-trial confinement, investigation, and prosecution and post-trial incarceration of individuals who commit terror and insurgency-related crimes.

The current JCIP jurisdiction includes former U.S. LOAC cases, and has been expanded to include new captures. This approach gives Afghanistan the ability to effectively prosecute and dismantle terror networks, which will improve regional security. When the United States loses its detention authorities at the end of 2014, a centralized facility where the most dangerous individuals are detained, investigated, and prosecuted remains the most efficient means by which to track, access, and prosecute individuals captured in partnered or counterterrorism related operations. CJIATF 435 has already resourced a multi-disciplined and functional team that will provide continued mentoring to the ANDF-P and JCIP into the Resolute Support Mission.

An Afghan-led Training Team session at the JCIP in April 2014 exemplifies JCIP's enhancing the legitimacy of Afghan Rule of Law. This training enables GIRoA to export excellence from its operations at the JCIP to the rest of Afghanistan. Several key Afghan Justice Actors participated including the Director of NDS Department 40, the Chief Administrator of the Afghan Supreme Court, the, Chief Primary and Appellate Judges of the JCIP, and the JCIP Chief Prosecutor. Also over 24 students from NDS, MoI and the Attorney General's Office participated. This training will surely improve Provincial Rule of Law efforts.

The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs is withdrawing personnel in direct support to the JCIP over the course of the summer, but intends to fund JCIP sustainment cost through the remainder of 2014. Continued U.S. support and funding beyond 2014 is essential for preserving and nurturing a robust Central National Security Court.

DISPOSITION OF THIRD COUNTY NATIONAL DETAINEES UNDER U.S. CONTROL

CJIATF 435 has custody of approximately 50 Third Country Nationals (TCN) from over 10 countries at the U.S.-controlled portion of the ANDF-P. CJIATF 435 is working vigorously with Office of the Secretary of Defense and Department of State to resolve the lawful disposition of these TCN cases by 31 July 2014. CJIATF 435, responsible for coordinating and conducting TCN movement, transfer, and repatriation missions, is scheduled to conclude its mission on or about 1 October 2014, and the detainee guard force will depart Afghanistan in early December 2014. Additionally, U.S. authority to detain individuals in Afghanistan under LOAC expires at the end of 2014, eliminating any flexibility in shifting disposition deadlines.

CONCLUSION

Despite political pressure to close detainee facilities, the United States' and Afghanistan's best interests are served by keeping the JCIP and ANDF-P functioning through 2015 and beyond. CJIATF 435 continues to focus on long term solutions to improve the Afghan ability to operate according to the Rule of Law, with a goal of Afghan self-sustainability by 2016. The centerpiece of this effort is an enduring and robust National Security Justice Center at Parwan capable of pre-trial confinement, investigation, prosecution, and post-trial incarceration of National Security Threats.

There are also critical short-term issues that must be addressed, including the continued detention of ESTs and the rather urgent need to obtain dispositions for the remaining TCN detainees. In light of the key detention and Rule of Law issues outlined above, Congress can greatly assist with both security and justice in Afghanistan by: (1) providing sufficient funding and support for the JCIP in order to bolster Afghan security and public confidence in the Afghan judicial system; (2) clearly communicating its desires regarding the proper disposition of ESTs; and (3) providing timely review and approval of TCN dispositions.

Senator GRAHAM. Finally, as to the war itself. This is an ideological struggle, do you agree? There's no nation state to conquer. When it comes to radical Islam, there's no capital to conquer, there's no air force to shoot down, there's no navy to sink. We're in an ideological battle with radical Islamists, right?

General DUNFORD. I agree with that, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. When I say "we," it's most of the Muslim world. It's not just us. Most of the Muslim world is in a battle with these guys.

General DUNFORD. Our coalition partners as well.

Senator GRAHAM. Absolutely. So what you're trying to tell us is that the best way to keep this war away from our Homeland is to have lines of defense throughout the world. These lines of defense would be places like Afghanistan that had a stable government, stable, improving economy, and security forces willing to fight the radicals. That's part of America's defense strategy, do you agree with that?

General DUNFORD. I do, Senator. Terrorists thrive in ungoverned spaces and that's what we're trying to do in Afghanistan, is ensure it's not an ungoverned space.

Senator GRAHAM. So I don't know when the war will end. Radical extremist movements are marginalized over time, would you agree, by better education, better economic opportunity in the areas they operate? The biggest blow really to the Taliban and al Qaeda is girls going to school.

General DUNFORD. I agree with that, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. People making their own choices. I know that's complicated and frustrating for us, but if we will invest in the people who are willing to fight the terrorists along our side, in their back yard, I think we would be smart.

Now, Afghanistan under Taliban control and 30 years of previous civil war was a devastated nation, is that fair to say?

General DUNFORD. It is fair to say.

Senator GRAHAM. What happened in 2001, a year later when we cleaned out the place, was a devastated society, absolutely no infrastructure.

General DUNFORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. I remember going to Kabul and there were just a very few lights. You go today, it's almost like Myrtle Beach. I like Myrtle Beach. It's a very vibrant place.

Lots of challenges, but there's two ways to look at Afghanistan, where we started and where we are today. Would you agree with me, in many ways it's amazing they've come as far as they have?

General DUNFORD. Senator, I absolutely believe that. I think if just a few years ago we would have described Afghanistan in 2014, I think very few people would have believed we would be where we are today.

Senator GRAHAM. I would be among those few.

Now, there's two ways to look at this, what they haven't done and how far they've come and what they're capable of doing. I believe the capability of the Afghan people is fairly unlimited when it comes to reforming Afghanistan. It's just going to take time. Do you agree with that proposition?

General DUNFORD. I do. Given the opportunity, Senator, I've seen them accomplish an extraordinary amount in a short time.

Senator GRAHAM. The key ingredient here is will and desire.

General DUNFORD. This is a clash of wills, there's no question.

Senator GRAHAM. The Afghan people have the will and desire to move out of the darkness into the light; is that a fair statement?

General DUNFORD. Absolutely, Senator. It reflects in the popularity rate of the Taliban, where they probably get somewhere between 11 and 15 percent at the highest in terms of the numbers of Afghan people who actually support the Taliban ideology.

Senator GRAHAM. How does al Qaeda poll?

General DUNFORD. We don't have an al Qaeda poll, Senator, but I suspect it would be much lower.

Senator GRAHAM. Probably like some percentage below that, yes.

So the bottom line here is that the ace in the hole for America is that most people in Afghanistan do not want to go back to the dark days of the Taliban. They want to go forward. They want a different world. It won't be like America. This is not Jeffersonian democracy. But it can be representative government. They can be a good ally. Don't you believe that?

General DUNFORD. I believe that, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So from the American people's point of view, I hope you understand that we're trying to build defenses abroad and let armies abroad do the fighting with minimal help from us, to keep the enemy at bay from attacking us, because the goal of al Qaeda is not just to control Afghanistan, it's to drive us out of the region, right?

General DUNFORD. That's exactly the plan for transition.

Senator GRAHAM. To drive us out of the region and leave that part of the world in their hands, and the economic chaos that that would create would be unimaginable. Do you agree with that?

General DUNFORD. I do, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. From an economic perspective, the United States has a great interest in making sure that that part of the world is stable.

General DUNFORD. I think if you look at the cost of September 11, you can make that argument very easily.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you also agree that if you're wanting to deter the Iranians from acquiring a nuclear capability, if we abandon Afghanistan, that's the worst possible signal you could send to the Iranians about our resolve regarding national security matters?

General DUNFORD. I think it would have a destabilizing effect on the region.

Senator GRAHAM. The Iranians would be one of the biggest winners of an unstable Afghanistan.

General DUNFORD. I believe so, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you and all of those under your command for extraordinary service. You've done a great job. We're inside the 10-yard line; do you believe that?

General DUNFORD. We are in the red zone, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. We're in the red zone and we can score if we don't call the wrong play.

General DUNFORD. Thank you, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Senator Levin will be back shortly, so we will stand down until he gets back.

[Recess from 10:48 a.m. to 10:54 a.m.]

Chairman LEVIN. General, thank you for your patience here. I'm not sure that any of my colleagues are coming back. I just have a couple of additional questions for you. I hope that if the staffs are aware of any Senators that are coming back they would let us know. I don't think there are, in which case we could end fairly promptly.

I talked to you in my office about a couple of incidents that occurred fairly recently during military operations. I think it's important when these incidents happen, some of which are truly tragic, that there be a prompt response on the part of our military.

The first is that radio station raid in Logar Province. Allegedly, our SOF scaled the walls of a compound, seized the owner of a radio station, and then beat and threatened him during an interrogation. What can you tell us about that raid?

General DUNFORD. Senator, that raid is under investigation. I actually would prefer not to talk about it publicly now, but could in private. I reviewed the draft report of the investigation last night, actually after we spoke. I got the initial results from the commander, our SOF commander. I think some time in the next couple of days we'll have the facts out.

Chairman LEVIN. That was on the radio station?

General DUNFORD. That's on the radio station.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, there was also a friendly fire incident in eastern Afghanistan where it was reported that a NATO air strike resulted in the friendly fire deaths of five Afghan army soldiers, I think also in Logar Province. Can you tell us about that incident?

General DUNFORD. Senator, that was clearly an incident of what we call blue on green. It was our aviation capability and there were

Afghan soldiers that were unfortunately killed. Again, the investigation is just about complete, so I can't speak publicly about that. We'll have the facts here in a couple of days, but in all honesty, Senator, something happened that should not have happened.

Chairman LEVIN. We've been working with the Afghans on that to try to remedy the losses to the extent that we can?

General DUNFORD. Very closely working with the Afghan leadership, to both investigate and also to take care of the families of the fallen.

[The information referred to follows:]



HEADQUARTERS
United States Forces-Afghanistan
Kabul, Afghanistan
APO AE 09356

April 18, 2014

The Honorable Carl Levin
 United States Senate
 269 Russell Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510-2202

Dear Senator Levin,

This letter is to report on the findings of investigations into two incidents you asked about during my testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee in March. We completed inquiries into the mission at an Afghan radio station and the friendly fire incident against Afghan National Army (ANA) forces.

I am confident that our forces did not maltreat detainees or destroy radio station property when we supported Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) in a successful mission to locate and seize suspected Taliban weapons in the Bini Sherafghan radio station. The ASSF developed intelligence, entered the radio station, searched the building, seized weapons and detained three Afghans for questioning. The detained individuals produced fraudulent documents alleging authority to have the weapons, and were taken for further questioning. US Special Forces medical personnel provided requested assistance to the detainees and observed no signs of maltreatment or abuse. Subsequent complaints were not corroborated by any physical evidence. At the conclusion of the mission there was no indication or complaint of damaged or inoperable equipment at the radio station.

Secondly, during an operation on March 6, 2014, Coalition forces mistakenly engaged members of the ANA, resulting in five soldiers killed and ten wounded. While I am confident our forces operated within the rules of engagement, our investigation revealed a need for continued improvement in establishing mission command and clearance of fires with our Afghan partners. We made condolence payments to the families of the killed and wounded, and I have given further direction to the force to ensure we learn from this incident and adjust our tactics, techniques and procedures as necessary.

We will continue to work to develop and improve the capabilities of our Afghan partners in all operations. Thank you for your continuing support to all of our forces.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.
 General, U.S. Marine Corps
 Commander
 International Security Assistance Force/
 United States Forces-Afghanistan

Chairman LEVIN. General, I had a chance to chat with a number of my colleagues running back and forth to vote and they unanimously, everyone that I spoke to, react the way I do to your service and your testimony. Most importantly, your testimony is compelling, your service is truly extraordinary over these decades. We all feel that way, and we just want to thank you. We want to thank your family. I know that we had a chance to spend a few minutes with your wife last night. We hope you also had an opportunity to spend a few minutes with your wife. In a few days, maybe you can find a few hours with your family, away from your huge challenges in Afghanistan. But we are deeply grateful to you and to all the men and women with whom you serve. Thank you.

With that, we will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:59 a.m., the committee adjourned.]

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JACK REED

U.S. FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

1. Senator REED. General Dunford, could you indicate if there is a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) concluded to the satisfaction of both sides, your estimate of how long the residual force will stay in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. With the strategic partnership between the United States and Afghanistan reinforced with a BSA, I am confident the bulk of our residual force would return home by the end of 2016. This additional 2-year period will allow us to ensure our years of support are reinforced with a focused train, advise, and assist effort, as well as enhanced development of the Afghan Security Ministries. The BSA will demonstrate our mutual commitment and advance our efforts.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BILL NELSON

AFGHAN LITERACY PROGRAM

2. Senator NELSON. General Dunford, in your estimation, how important is the Afghan Literacy Program (ALP) to the viability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), with or without U.S. presence in 2015?

General DUNFORD. The ALP is fundamental to the professionalization of the ANSF. This program is requisite for the training and education system for targeted career paths, service progression, and professionalization within the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). As such, the ALP is fundamental to the long-term viability of the ANSF. As the ANA conduct advanced training on more complex tasks and equipment, a targeted literacy program will be essential for future professional development. Furthermore, literacy is the underpinning of the ANP's basic execution of rule of law. The ANP must be functionally literate to enforce the law, investigate crime, and report findings.

The current ALP, funded by coalition forces, will conclude by the end of 2014, having trained most of the ANSF to Literacy Level 1, but no more than 20 percent to Level 3. In order to progress to future professional force with appropriate levels of literacy, institutional literacy training is essential for targeted specialties of incoming ANSF. Additionally, the ANSF require a Train-the-Trainer (T3) program, to develop an organic literacy training capability. An ongoing literacy program, led by the Afghans, is the key to enable the ANSF to be self-sufficient and eventually become independent from foreign support for increasing and maintaining their literacy capabilities. Regardless of U.S. presence in 2015, the ALP is critical to the professionalization of the ANSF.

3. Senator NELSON. General Dunford, if the BSA is signed, would you support dedicating additional resources to the oversight of the ALP?

General DUNFORD. In December 2013, Afghan Barez HR Services Company was contracted by NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) for the Literacy Oversight Inspection Activity to ensure the existing quality and quantity of ongoing ALP for the ANSF. The key inspection task of this oversight instrument is to monitor all literacy training programs at approximately 500 locations throughout Afghani-

stan. The oversight mission will also ensure that NTM-A's literacy programs are in compliance with the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) developed standards and literacy curriculum. Until now, this oversight contract and the onsite inspections of NTM-A's advisor teams have provided sufficient quality control for the current ALP. Shifting the focus to institutional literacy training from country-wide to centralized training at training centers will further improve oversight quality. Additionally, there is increased interest in providing ANSF tashkil positions for ANSF literacy instructors, increasing literacy site visits, and developing a literacy-level tracking system. As a result of the demonstrated progress and continued program management initiatives there is no need to dedicate additional resources to the oversight of the ANSF ALP.

4. Senator NELSON. General Dunford, in its recent report to Congress, the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction cited an abuse of the system from an unidentified contractor who billed for "multiple classes at one site that could have been combined into one class." To the best of your knowledge, were these poor practices conducted by one, some, or all of the literacy contractors?

General DUNFORD. The old literacy training contracts allowed OT Training Solutions, Inc., Insight Group, and Higher Education Institute of Karwan to bill for each class where instruction was provided rather than for the number of hours taught in each class. Additionally, the contracts did not clearly define a minimum class size. This lack of clarity in the tasks order allowed one contractor to bill for multiple classes held at the same location that logically could have been combined into a single class. The new contracts currently in place establish a minimum class size and include more strict oversight controls to safeguard available fiscal resources.

5. Senator NELSON. General Dunford, can you provide recommendations for addressing these concerns in future contracts?

General DUNFORD. Based on past experience and lessons learned, we have significantly revised the ongoing ANSF training provided in the literacy and language program by updating the task order awards under three current contracts, which are valid until the end of 2014. The new contracts are now of shorter terms, have a narrower spectrum of application, and include a more strict metrics framework. As an example, contractors are now paid a fixed amount for measurable performance and we established a 10 student minimum for class size in order for contractors to be paid. This has already resulted in substantial savings and higher confidence that the ANSF are receiving the literacy training that donor nations have paid for. Finally, we observed all applicable rules and regulations in the awarding of these latest contracts to include the conduct of background checks on the contractors.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR KELLY AYOTTE

NO CONTRACTING WITH THE ENEMY

6. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, last year you testified that it is critical to expand No Contracting with the Enemy authorities to the Department of State (DOS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Is that still your view?

General DUNFORD. Yes.

7. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, why do you believe it is important that other Federal agencies, including DOS and USAID, are given No Contracting with the Enemy fiscal year 2012, section 841, authorities?

General DUNFORD. Yes.

8. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, on March 6, General Austin testified that these authorities have been used to save taxpayers \$31 million and have prevented those funds from going to our enemies. Is that your understanding as well?

General DUNFORD. Yes.

9. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, when was the last contract terminated in Afghanistan using these authorities?

General DUNFORD. The last time we used section 841 authorities to terminate a contract in Afghanistan was January 2013. This was the last time that a contractor that was determined to meet the statutory criteria was involved in an active contract or bidding on a new contract supporting our operations. Since then, in addition to developing 841 actions, we have used our vendor vetting process to assess thou-

sands of relevant contractors and their key personnel, and to preempt a specified subset of such contractors from being considered for contracts, fully consistent with the intent of section 841.

10. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, how many cases are pending?
 General DUNFORD. We have eight potential section 841 cases that we are currently conducting extensive research as part of the process.

11. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, how long have they been pending?
 General DUNFORD. The proposals have been in coordination for a range of 3 to 6 months. The variations, and the timeline itself, have been driven by intelligence updates and the recrafting of the coordination process (see answer to question 10 for more details).

A-10

12. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, at the November 7, 2013, sequestration hearing before this committee, General Odierno said regarding the A-10 that, "I believe it is the Department of Defense's best Close Air Support (CAS) platform." At the same hearing, he also said, "Our soldiers are very confident in the system as it goes forward. It's a great CAS aircraft." How has the A-10 performed in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. The A-10's performance in Afghanistan has been very effective.

13. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, the Air Force has said the A-10 has a 1 to 2 minutes faster re-attack time than other aircraft. In a danger close situation in which American soldiers or marines are about to be overrun by the enemy, can 1 to 2 minutes be the difference between life and death?

General DUNFORD. Yes.

14. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, is the A-10 particularly effective at performing some kinds of CAS missions in Afghanistan—such as missions involving danger close engagements, bad weather, rugged terrain, and moving targets?

General DUNFORD. Yes.

15. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, from January 1, 2002, to January 1, 2014, in Afghanistan, how many mission reports have been filed by A-10s?

General DUNFORD. Mission reports are collected by the Coalition Forces Air Component Commander, therefore this question would be best answered by U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

16. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, from January 1, 2002, to January 1, 2014, in Afghanistan, how many CAS employments with nine lines?

General DUNFORD. The joint force air component database does not delineate CAS missions by nine-line provision. Additionally, the database only contains Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) kinetic attack data since 2009. For Afghanistan CAS missions, a comparison of targets struck by kinetic munitions provides the best approximation of nine-lines provided, though nine-lines are also provided for targets which are then addressed by non-kinetic means. Between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2013, there were 7,599 kinetic events. For targets where kinetic munitions were employed, A-10s attacked 24 percent of these targets while other aircraft attacked 76 percent of these targets.

17. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, from January 1, 2002, to January 1, 2014, in Afghanistan, what percentage of the total number of CAS employments with nine lines did the A-10 carry out?

General DUNFORD. The joint force air component database does not delineate CAS missions by nine-line provision. Additionally, the database only contains OEF kinetic attack data since 2009. For Afghanistan CAS missions, a comparison of targets struck by kinetic munitions provides the best approximation of nine-lines provided, though nine-lines are also provided for targets which are then addressed by non-kinetic means. For targets where kinetic munitions were employed, A-10s attacked 24 percent of these targets while other aircraft attacked 76 percent of these targets.

IRANIAN ACTIVITY IN AFGHANISTAN

18. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, has Iran provided assistance, weapons, or training to insurgents in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Yes, we believe Iran provides measured assistance, weapons, and training to insurgents in Afghanistan, likely since at least 2002. Iran has historically backed Tajik and Shi'a groups opposed to the Afghan Taliban, but tensions and enmity with the West have driven Tehran to provide measured support to insurgents in Afghanistan. Over the years, coalition forces have seized several large weapons shipments near the Iranian border that were almost certainly of Iranian origin. Iran likely is also training insurgents inside Iranian territory. Iran calibrates the size and scope of the lethal aid it provides the insurgency, likely so the insurgents can target International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and coalition forces more effectively.

19. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, what role is Iran playing now in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Iran likely is pursuing a multi-tiered strategy in Afghanistan. Iran is improving relations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) while supporting the insurgency to hinder coalition efforts. Tehran's outreach to Kabul is centered on diplomacy and economic aid, in an attempt to minimize western presence and influence in Afghanistan. Iran's President Rouhani, who assumed office in August 2013, has used softer rhetoric than his predecessor to try and improve bilateral relations and outreach to Afghan Shia communities. In December 2013, Tehran and Kabul announced they will sign a bilateral "Friendship and Cooperation" pact to bolster security cooperation, trade, and cultural exchanges and further solidify their relationship. This agreement is still in negotiation.

20. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, what is Iran doing in western Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Iran and Afghanistan have a long, shared history of cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, and religious ties. Tehran considers western Afghanistan, especially the city of Herat, as an integral part of Iranian territory within its natural sphere of influence. Iran is trying to develop better relations with GIRoA through the use of diplomacy and economic aid, likely in an attempt to minimize western presence and influence in western Afghanistan. Since 2001, Iran has provided likely hundreds of millions of dollars to support Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic development, primarily in western Afghanistan and Herat Province, where Iran maintains a diplomatic consulate.

AFGHAN DETAINEES

21. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, on February 13, 2014, the Karzai Government released 65 detainees from the Afghan National Detention Facility at Parwan. Have some of these detainees resumed terrorist activities?

General DUNFORD. While it is possible, at this time, we do not have any credible indications that any of the 65 detainees released from the Afghan National Detention Facility on February 13 resumed terrorist or insurgent activities.

22. Senator AYOTTE. General Dunford, I understand there are an additional 23 detainees of this type still being held by the Afghan Government at the Parwan facility. Do we know what the Afghan Government plans do with them?

General DUNFORD. It is our understanding that the additional 23 detainees have been referred for prosecution at the Justice Center in Parwan and are pending criminal trial.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MIKE LEE

POST-2014 MISSION

23. Senator LEE. General Dunford, is it correct to say our military leaders believe we need a residual force in Afghanistan because the Afghan Government and the ANSF are currently unable to defeat insurgents and maintain stability in the country without international assistance?

General DUNFORD. The ANSF's improving capabilities in 2013 and the first quarter of 2014 were demonstrated in large and complex combat operations across the country. Due to existing capability gaps and developmental shortfalls, the ANSF relied on ISAF for enabler support, particularly in the areas of close air support, cas-

uality evacuation, logistics, counter-improvised explosive device (IED), and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. On balance, after watching the ANSF respond to a variety of challenges over the past year, I do not believe the Taliban-led insurgency represents an existential threat to GIRQA or the ANSF. However, while the ANSF's performance shows they require less ISAF assistance in conducting security operations, they do need a great deal of help in developing sustainable systems, processes, and institutions necessary to run a modern, professional Ministry of Defense (MoD), Ministry of Interior (MoI), army, and police force. Absent that support, I believe the ANSF and security conditions will deteriorate.

24. Senator LEE. General Dunford, would you characterize a post-2014 mission in Afghanistan as one that is focused on stabilizing Afghanistan from internal and regional threats, or one where our forces are engaged against terror organizations that are plotting against the United States?

General DUNFORD. Our objective for Afghanistan beyond 2014 remains developing a sustainable, inclusive, and increasingly stable political order committed to and capable of denying safe haven to al Qaeda. Our post-2014 mission will be focused on developing ANSF sustainability so they can deny sanctuary to terrorists in Afghanistan.

25. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what strategic goals would a residual force be tasked with accomplishing?

General DUNFORD. A residual force would be tasked with preventing the enemy from attacking the homeland and continue to build sustainable partnerships that would protect national interests from potential threats from the region. By investing in the stability of the Afghan Government and the ANSF, we create another layer of defense against those whom try to bring harm to the United States. The reductions in ungoverned spaces that exist limit the enemy's freedom of movement and action. A stable Afghanistan can contribute to the reduction of those spaces and contribute in the aggregate to denying enemies access to the homeland and ultimately neutralizing terrorist networks.

26. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what are the direct threats to U.S. national security currently in Afghanistan?

General DUNFORD. Although weakened and pressured by U.S. counterterrorism efforts, al Qaeda and its affiliates, especially the Haqqani Network, continue to operate in Afghanistan and the region. Al Qaeda still holds ambitions to attack the United States and its interests. Due to constant pressure from counterterrorism operations, al Qaeda is now focused on survival. While they have been reduced to numbers much smaller than those before September 11, al Qaeda still remains a threat to the United States. Without continued pressure, al Qaeda will regenerate and once again directly threaten the United States and its interests.

27. Senator LEE. General Dunford, generally speaking, how will any mission beyond 2014 be different than the mission that we are executing there today?

General DUNFORD. We will transition from conducting operations and combat advising to ensuring the current progress is enduring by building the long-term sustainability of the Afghan forces. Although the Afghans require less support in conducting security operations, they still need assistance in maturing the systems, the processes, and the institutions necessary to support a modern ANA and ANP. To address these areas, a train, advise, and assist mission will be necessary after this year to further develop Afghan self-sustainment. ISAF are re-orienting from unit-level combat advising to functionally-based advising. At the security ministries, this means improving capacity and institutionalizing transparent planning, programming, budgeting, and acquisition processes. In the fielded force, advisors will focus on specific capability gaps in aviation, intelligence, and special operations enterprises. At all levels, our advisors will work to improve Afghan transparency and accountability of donor resources, and development of the "connective tissue" which ties the ministerial level to the operational and tactical level. A continued counterterrorism mission will also be needed to ensure al Qaeda remains focused on survival and not on regeneration. Without continued counterterrorism pressure, an emboldened al Qaeda will not only begin to physically reconstitute but they will also exploit their perceived victory to boost recruitment, fund raising, and morale.

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

28. Senator LEE. General Dunford, how are we measuring the progress of the Afghan Government and the ANSF to determine if they still need international assistance? That is to say, what accomplishment or achievements would lead you to say we no longer need to have forces there?

General DUNFORD. The ISAF advisory networks within the MoD, MoI, and the ANSF measure progress based on eight essential functions:

1. Plan, Program, Budget, and Execute; generate requirements, develop a resource informed budget, and execute a spend plan
2. Internal controls to assure Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight
3. Civilian governance of the Afghan Security Institutions (ASI), including adherence to the rule of law
4. Force generate; train, retain, manage, and develop a professional ANSF
5. Sustain the force through effective facilities management, maintenance, medical, and logistics systems
6. Plan, resource, and execute effective security campaigns and operations
 - a. Inter-ministerial and joint coordination
 - b. Command, control, and employ Ground, Air, and Special Operating Forces
7. Sufficient intelligence capabilities and processes
8. Maintain internal and external strategic communication capability

ISAF forces are re-orienting from unit-level combat advising to functionally-based advising. Focus has shifted from building the force to building ASI long-term sustainability. At the security ministries, this means improving capacity, and institutionalizing transparent planning, programming, budgeting, and acquisition processes. At all levels within the different security pillars—army, police, and intelligence service—advisors are working to improve integration. In the fielded force, advisors will focus on specific capability gaps in aviation, intelligence, and special operations enterprises. They will also focus on developmental shortfalls in areas like logistics, medical, and counter-IED. At all levels, our advisors will work to improve Afghan transparency and accountability of donor resources, and development of the “connective tissue” which ties the ministerial level to the operational and tactical level.

Assuming Chicago Summit resources and limited advisory support, our mission would be successful when the ASI and ANSF can execute and integrate the eight essential functions in order to meet Afghan security objectives and serve as an effective counterterrorism partner.

INSURGENT AND AL QAEDA THREAT

29. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what is the goal of insurgent groups who are fighting against our forces in Afghanistan? Do they seek to overthrow and replace the government, carve out and control certain territory, or attack the United States and other western targets?

General DUNFORD. The overall goal of the Taliban-led insurgency is to eject foreign forces, remove the democratically-elected Afghan Government, and reestablish the Taliban's Islamic Emirate. Most of the other insurgent groups in Afghanistan, while also pursuing localized interests, largely support this goal. This includes the Haqqani Network, which we assess will seek control over the Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost areas of Afghanistan under a Taliban-led government. We have no indications the Taliban insurgency has the intent or plans to attack the United States or other western targets outside of Afghanistan, and we assess they will remain Afghanistan-focused post 2014.

30. Senator LEE. General Dunford, can you give me details about how insurgent groups are recruiting and training fighters to fight against Afghan and international forces, including the insurgency's make-up according to nationality and if the numbers of insurgents are increasing or decreasing?

General DUNFORD. Insurgent fighters are largely locally Afghan-based, and join the Taliban-led insurgency for a multitude of reasons, to include: pressure to join out of tribal or family affiliation; a sense of religious or national pride to remove foreign forces; money, power, or a position of power; a sense of disenfranchisement with the current government; or they simply have no other options available to them to provide for their families. Other recruits come from religious schools or madrassas, some of which are located in Pakistan, where they are inculcated with insurgent values and perceptions. Most of the training for these recruits occurs in the insurgency's Pakistan sanctuary along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border over the

winter months, where they learn basic small unit tactics and IED construction and emplacement. While the insurgency is overwhelmingly Afghan in nationality, ethnic Pashtun and Baloch Pakistani nationals have contributed recruits. We lack insight into definitive numbers of fighters in the insurgency, hindering our ability to accurately assess whether recruiting is increasing or decreasing to any significant degree. However, we expect a successful election and the transition from ISAF to Resolute Support (and the corresponding decrease in visibility of foreign forces) will remove several key motives for Afghans to join the insurgency.

31. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what efforts are being made by coalition forces and Afghanistan to fight the recruitment and training efforts of insurgent forces, and have they been successful?

General DUNFORD. The primary efforts to fight recruitment of insurgent forces are Afghan led with media campaigns highlighting the ANA and ANP to underscore that these are good Afghans and therefore provide a stark contrast to the Taliban recruiting efforts. The supporting coalition efforts are generally classified. The results are captured quarterly through national surveys that ask about Afghans' opinions of the Taliban. In March 2014, 76.5 percent indicated that it would be bad if the Taliban returned to power, up from 74.9 percent in December 2013.

REGIONAL CONCERN

32. Senator LEE. General Dunford, is Pakistan working in a way that helps or hinders the mission in Afghanistan, and do you expect their behavior to change any as we draw down our troop strength?

General DUNFORD. Pakistan both helps and hinders the mission in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Sharif's government assumed office in mid-2013 and has sought to increase engagement with Afghanistan, to include multiple direct meetings between President Karzai and Sharif. Islamabad has publicly declared its support for GIRoA and the ISAF mission. Further, Pakistan is cooperating on ISAF retrograde operations and some counterterrorism activities targeting al Qaeda. Pakistan has made some progress interdicting and disrupting the production of IED components, but still falls short on stemming the flow of these components into Afghanistan. Nevertheless, Islamabad allows al Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban, and the Haqqani Network sanctuary inside Pakistan. The Taliban and Haqqani Network use this sanctuary to launch attacks into Afghanistan targeting U.S., coalition, and GIRoA forces. Cross-border incidents and lingering mistrust remain points of tension in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations and both countries continue to question each other's commitments to advancing a political settlement in Afghanistan.

33. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what is your assessment of the relationship between the Government of Afghanistan and Iran, separately the relationship between the Taliban and Iran, and the influence of Iran in the country?

General DUNFORD. I believe this question would be best answered by CENTCOM.

34. Senator LEE. General Dunford, do you believe the influence of Iran in Afghanistan is undermining U.S. security efforts, and does the relationship between the Afghan Government and Iran put our servicemembers in danger?

General DUNFORD. At the strategic level, Iran's influence in Afghanistan is not substantial enough to undermine U.S. security efforts. Iran provides calibrated lethal aid and training to insurgents, which in turn allows insurgents to threaten U.S. and coalition forces at the tactical level. However, Iran is likely unwilling to provide enough insurgent support to challenge GIRoA or the U.S. overall security efforts. Iran's support to insurgents is likely part of Iran's traditional practice to provide support—monetary, lethal, and political—to a variety of parties, thus ensuring influence in any future Afghan Government. Iran's relationship with the Afghan Government is likely driven, in 2014, to curtail or minimize the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. While any support Iran provides to the insurgency sustains violence against ANSF and ISAF, Iran's relationship with Afghan Government does not put our servicemembers in any greater danger beyond the established insurgency and insurgent Pakistani Taliban.

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

35. Senator LEE. General Dunford, are we fully accounting for the proper use and maintenance of these projects, and much like the ANSF, will the Afghan Government eventually be able to financially sustain this infrastructure on their own?

General DUNFORD. Over the course of a decade, the United States and its coalition partners initiated \$8.5 billion in new construction projects to provide the ANSF adequate facilities to protect the Afghan people. Last summer, the ANSF assumed lead for Afghanistan's security allowing the coalition to vacate hundreds of temporary facilities. U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) remains committed to being a good steward of taxpayers' dollars. In the last year, USFOR-A's actions have saved between \$600 million to \$800 million in planned funding, in part, by offsetting new construction with the transfer of these existing coalition bases.

The long lead times in construction have not always kept pace with the changing security environment and operational needs of the ANSF. As a result, the coalition has completed construction on some infrastructure projects that the Afghans are not fully utilizing. Just as requirements, priorities, and funding levels evolve, USFOR-A constantly reevaluates and adjusts the ANSF infrastructure program to meet current basing needs and provide the flexibility to meet a range of likely future requirements.

Our current focus is on helping our Afghan partners develop and execute strategies to sustain all these facilities in an affordable manner. This Security Force Assistance effort includes building the ministerial processes and capabilities of the Afghan security institutions, particularly in resource management and facilities sustainment. With coalition advisors assistance, our Afghan partners are determining sustainment, restoration, and modernization requirements. We will continue to advise our efforts as they prioritize these requirements and make hard choices of what capabilities they will fund in a fiscally constrained environment.

AFGHAN ELECTIONS

36. Senator LEE. General Dunford, President Karzai will be out of office by the end of this year. How closely are you and other military and diplomatic leaders working with the candidates who could potentially become the next President?

General DUNFORD. The U.S. Embassy has been working very closely with the candidates.

37. Senator LEE. General Dunford, do you perceive the transition of power to cause much disruption of the day-to-day military cooperation between U.S. and Afghan forces?

General DUNFORD. Every transition of power requires careful attention to continuity. There will be turnover in ANSF leadership as a result of the election, although the specifics of that turnover are unclear at this time. However, I do not anticipate any major negative impact on day-to-day military cooperation. By word and deed we have consistently communicated to our Afghan partners that we are entirely agnostic about the outcome of the election, our sole objective being a secure and inclusive election for the Afghan people. In turn, the ANSF have, to date, taken as their duty the very same objective. Because of well-established working relationships, based on mutual trust with our Afghan partners at all levels, we will continue to meet our challenges together while Afghanistan's higher-order political dynamics play out. At the same time, indicative of their increasing professionalism, the Afghans are developing depth in their leadership, so that even with turnover, allowing for adjustments on both sides, I anticipate maintaining continuity in military cooperation.

FUNDING

38. Senator LEE. General Dunford, I asked Secretary Hagel last week if Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding for Afghanistan would be reduced proportionally to the number of troops that remain. He and Secretary Hale answered that OCO funding would be reduced, but not at a proportional level because of equipment that needs to be retrograded and modernized from the conflict. How much do you estimate the removal of this equipment from the Afghan theater and the necessary retrograde work will cost?

General DUNFORD. It will cost approximately \$1.52 billion (from the date of the question until December 31, 2014) to retrograde remaining U.S. equipment from Afghanistan, in accordance with current planning assumptions about enduring force presence, size, and disposition. This estimate does not include Service-specific costs for reset of equipment, second destination costs within the continental United States or modernization costs. All of these costs would have to be provided independently by the Services and are not estimable by USFOR-A.

39. Senator LEE. General Dunford, what proportion of equipment coming out of Afghanistan needs to be modernized for future use?

General DUNFORD. Service-specific modernization needs for equipment coming out of Afghanistan would be best answered by the Services and are not estimable by USFOR-A.

40. Senator LEE. General Dunford, how much has the activity of Pakistan over the past several years, such as the closure of the Ground Lines of Communication in 2012, increased the cost of equipment retrograde?

General DUNFORD. I believe this question would be best answered by CENTCOM.

41. Senator LEE. General Dunford, can you provide me with a comprehensive analysis about the increase of costs due to Pakistan?

General DUNFORD. I believe this question would be best answered by CENTCOM.

